

V.M. GAVRILOV

LENIN'S

**"THE
PROLETARIAN
REVOLUTION
AND
THE RENEGADE
KAUTSKY"**



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PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
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by G. P. Ivanov-Munster

Designed by Vadim Navikov

B. M. Gasparov

Описание Б. М. Гаспарова

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Lenin's book *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* was first published by Kommunist Publishers in Moscow at the end of 1918. Its theses became part and parcel of the Marxist-Leninist theory of socialist revolution. In this work Lenin generalised the experience of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the first year of Soviet power, subjected the attitude of Karl Kautsky, the ideological leader of the Second International, to the young Soviet state to all-round criticism, and showed up Kautsky's disregard of the vital interests of the working class.

The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky serves Marxists-Leninists as a theoretical weapon in the present struggle of ideas, gives a key to understanding the essence of the current attacks on revolutionary theory, and substantiates the need to wage a revolutionary struggle for socialism.

* * *

Lenin began writing *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* at the beginning of October 1918, immediately after reading Kautsky's pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, in which that prominent member of

the West European and especially German Social Democratic movement of those days assessed the political developments in revolutionary Russia.

Such a rapid reaction to Kautsky's pamphlet was not accidental. The leader of the world's first state of workers and peasants closely followed the repercussions the proletarian revolution in Russia had in other countries and immediately assessed each one of them. Kautsky was regarded in the Second International as an advocate of the revolutionary way to socialism and, consequently, Lenin could not be indifferent to his opinion.

In the autumn of 1918 Soviet Russia was probably going through one of the most difficult periods in its history. The civil war was on and foreign interventionists had come to the aid of internal counter-revolution. By August 1918 the external and internal enemies of Soviet Russia were in control of three-quarters of its territory. The Soviet republic was encircled by fronts and cut off from its main food and raw material areas. This compelled the proletarian state to resort to a series of emergency measures which came to be known as the policy of War Communism. Urgent steps were taken to safeguard the gains of the revolution—establishment of the Red Army, appointment of workers and peasants to command posts, provision of the fighting forces with food and arms.

The position of the Soviet republic continued to deteriorate, however. Further difficulties piled up on famine and dislocation. The victory of the Entente powers became a fact by the autumn of 1918 and this enabled them to extend

the scale of military operations against Soviet Russia and increase military aid to the forces of internal counter-revolution.

Lenin rightly thought that the revolutionary wave which had reached Central Europe from Soviet Russia and swept Germany and Austria-Hungary could strongly hamper the regrouping of the external counter-revolutionary forces. The mass discontent of the population, who had experienced the horrors of the First World War, led to an upsurge of the revolutionary working-class movement unknown in the history of European countries. A revolutionary government—the Council of People's Representatives—was formed in Finland in January 1918. Councils, patterned on the Soviets in Russia, were being organised in Poland. In November 1918 came the revolutionary overthrow of the monarchies in Germany and Austria-Hungary. Seizure of factories by workers and landowners' estates by peasants became a common occurrence in Italy. The movement of solidarity with Soviet Russia was gaining ground among the workers of France, Britain and the United States.

In the conditions of the revolutionary upsurge, the future of proletarian revolutions, in Lenin's view, depended much on the readiness of the proletarian parties to assume the role of political leader of the revolutionary masses. For that it was necessary for the leaders of the working-class movement to be able creatively to assimilate all that was valuable and useful in the experience of the proletarian revolution in Russia.

Studying Kautsky's *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, Lenin arrived at the conclusion

that, instead of critically analysing the experience of the proletarian revolution in Russia and elucidating the laws governing it and its peculiarities, the author "produces an incredible theoretical muddle, which converts Marxism into liberalism".¹ In his analysis of the proletarian revolution in Russia, Kautsky, professing devotion to Marxism, departs from its revolutionary content. The complexities of the political situation revolutionary Russia met with at home and abroad played a part in making Kautsky turn to opportunism, to capitulate politically before the difficulties of revolutionary struggle.

The proletarian revolution in Russia, in Kautsky's eyes, was an uncontrollable, spontaneous mutiny of the masses. He saw nothing in the revolution but a machine for the suppression and restriction of the democratic rights of a part of the members to notice the main thing—the historical initiative of the masses which, within an unprecedentedly brief period, gave rise to a new, highest type of democracy: proletarian democracy. On a scale never seen before, millions of working people of different nationalities joined independently in political activities, and their energy was directed towards the practical abolition of all forms of social injustice and the building of an absolutely new society.

Like a number of other leaders of the Second International, Kautsky did not understand the lessons of the proletarian revolu-

tion in Russia. He oriented the working class on the struggle for socialism solely within the framework of bourgeois democracy and that was tantamount to leading the working class astray and could end in a tragedy for it.

Lenin deemed it his duty to warn of that. Before finishing the book *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Lenin had written an article under the same title which was published in *Pravda* on October 11, 1918. A few weeks later it was read by workers in Berlin and Vienna.

Lenin finished working on the last sections of the book on November 9, 1918. On its pages one found a detailed and all-round analysis of the political developments in revolutionary Russia. It elucidated the international significance of the experience of the proletarian revolution and exposed the danger presented to the revolutionary movement by Kautsky's theoretical delusions. History lost no time proving correct Lenin's assessment of Kautskyism. The defeat of the German proletariat in the November 1918 revolution was to no small degree due to the stand of its Social Democratic leaders, inspired by the ideas Kautsky expatiated on in his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*.

* * *

Events of worldwide historic importance have taken place on our planet since the publication of Lenin's *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. A world community of socialist countries has come into being. The colonial system of imperial-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers, Vol. 28, Moscow, 1977, p. 306.

ism has disintegrated. The might and prestige of the working-class movement in the capitalist countries have grown. The political face of the world has radically changed and new conditions have appeared for the struggle for socialism. But *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* has lost none of its topicality for those who refuse to reconcile themselves with any forms of social oppression and injustice, for those who have dedicated themselves to the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism. The book has stood numerous editions in dozens of languages. The reason for the unflagging interest in this book is obvious: its ideas are in keeping with the times. The reader looks for and finds in it the key to many actual problems of our epoch, the epoch of mankind's transition from capitalism to socialism.

Lenin's book contains a Marxist-Leninist point of view on the questions of struggle for peace and the international solidarity of the peace forces, theoretically substantiates the fundamental difference between bourgeois and socialist democracies, and proves invalid the philosophy of social passivity and the wait-and-see policy. Lenin devoted much attention in the book to the working people's revolutionary struggle, which confirms the operation of general laws in the epoch of mankind's transition from capitalism to socialism. At the same time, it is known that each new revolution meets with conditions that differ from those of the previous revolutions. Every revolution is enriched by the experience of the preceding

ones, but takes place in the changed conditions of their creation. *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* shows the methods to be employed in order creatively to learn the lessons of past revolutions and thus enrich revolutionary struggle.

2. REVOLUTION AND POWER

In our revolutionary age ever-new generations and strata of working people are joining in the movement of social protest against the capitalist system protected by bourgeois states. Factory and office workers, peasants, intellectuals and students show increasing interest in Marxism, which differs from all other socialist theories by an organic combination of scientific objectivity in the analysis of society's social evolution and recognition of the historical significance of revolutionary energy: the initiative and creativity of the masses.

At the same time, though displaying interest in Marxism, some social circles do not recognise its highly important theses about the constructive role played in world history by the revolutionary masses. This is notably characteristic of many liberal intellectuals. Admiring Marx's works and the wealth of his reflections on the historical destinies, outlook and preordainment of mankind, they nevertheless do not transcend the framework of their conception of the ways of achieving the ideals of universal social justice. Liberal intellectuals long cultivated the view that Marxism was an "alien body" in the history of Western thought. Many publications now portray Marx as an outstanding

liberal thinker. Moreover, the social and class essence of his doctrine of state and democracy is hushed up and Marxism in general is depicted as a description of the eternal forms of human relations that are accessible to all.

Lenin anticipated the possibility of such a way of "popularising" Marxism back in 1918, when the tendency to turn Marx into a liberal and gloss over the revolutionary essence of his views was just coming into being. He regarded it as vitally necessary to show the masses, using the ideological degradation of Kautsky's views as an example, where the theoretically wrong liberalisation of Marxism and its theories about the state and revolution were leading. Lenin wrote *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* to disclose the practical significance of the revolutionary essence of Marxism for the struggle for socialism.

The State and the Revolution

In his book *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* Lenin concentrated on the problems of revolution's attitude to the state and democracy. The bourgeois state is a political superstructure on the system of basic (economic) relations of bourgeois society, relations of capitalist ownership and exploitation, and is destined to protect them. To do away with these basic relations and build a society where there is no exploitation of man by man, the working class must take possession of the levers of

power, intrude into the political superstructure and radically alter the state machine. The demolition of the bourgeois state machine and its replacement by a state of the socialist type are indispensable if a socialist society is to be built. Upholding its interests, the ruling class relies above all on instruments of political power, on the political and ideological apparatus of manipulating the consciousness of large strata of the population. It is impossible to build socialism without abolishing the political repressive machine, the system of political administration of society and regulation of people's frame of mind.

The form of abolition of the bourgeois state and the takeover of power by the working class depend on the concrete historical conditions in which the revolution comes about and develops. In Russia, where the revolution met with furious resistance from internal and external counter-revolution, the class struggle was exceptionally bitter, and so the formation of the socialist state there took an extremely grim form, which did not recur in the subsequent socialist revolutions.

Proceeding from this fact, liberal-minded intellectuals advance conceptions to the effect that because of the unique socio-political conditions in pre-revolutionary Russia and the weak democratic traditions there, the Bolsheviks were forced to discard the parliamentary way of struggle for socialism. That Marx's teaching notwithstanding, they resorted to the "less democratic", violent way: to the demolition of the state machine and the dissolution of its political institutions.

Disquisitions of this kind are ideologically rooted in Kautsky's work *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, which is a sort of manifesto of reformism, renunciation of the need radically to smash the bourgeois state machine.

Kautsky constantly turned to the concept of the so-called pure democracy based on his personal notions of Marxism which to a certain extent took shape under the influence of the ideas of the liberal thinkers at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th whenever he set out to substantiate his attitude to the bourgeois state. According to Kautsky's notions, the proletarian revolution must be less dramatic than the bourgeois revolutions, proceed without conflicts and be devoid of violence against the class enemy. Each new step forward must be preceded by careful political preparations, the working class must not impinge the existing socio-political institutions, freedoms, etc. Kautsky held that the bourgeois state was no obstruction on the way of the gradual "democratisation" of bourgeois society. Consequently it was his opinion that the working class could assume control of the political apparatus of power step by step, using transition from one coalition government with the bourgeoisie to another for this purpose.

There is no denying the fact that the bourgeois-democratic system as a form of political domination by monopoly capital took shape under the influence of the struggle of the working class. Under capitalism, democracy is in the final count the result of the masses' struggle. One cannot, however, expect that the bourgeois-

democratic system will become an instrument of socialist transformations. The essence of the bourgeois state remains unchanged no matter what democratic forms it may assume. Even in the bourgeois revolution, when the bourgeoisie had no well adjusted state machine, it succeeded in restricting the political activities of the masses. The governments in coalition with the bourgeoisie cannot allow the proletariat to seize political rule or even neutralise the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois state machinery is more authoritative than the powers and competence of every government in any capitalist country.

Exposing Kautsky's erroneous views on the proletariat's tasks in the revolution, Lenin wrote that he "repeats the fairy-tale about 'pure democracy', which has been told a thousand times by liberal professors".¹ And further: "The Kautskys and Vanderveldes say nothing about the fact that the transitional stage between the state as an organ of the rule of the proletariat is *revolution*, which means *overthrowing* the bourgeoisie and *breaking up*, *smashing*, *their* state machine."²

Refuting Kautsky's claim that Marx never combined proletarian revolution with violence, with the destruction of the bourgeois state machine, Lenin bared the essence of his errors. In Kautsky's view, Marx opposed "dictatorial" methods in politics and regarded proletarian revolution as a historically creative process only in the light of improvement of the democratic forms of statehood. In Marxism,

Lenin pointed out, the truly creative purpose of the proletarian revolution coincides in both content and form. But the proletarian revolution, destined to put an end to all violence and create a new, higher type of democracy cannot but be violent in form. "The proletarian revolution," Lenin wrote, "is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a *new one* which, in the words of Engels, is 'no longer a state in the proper sense of the word'."³

The whole purport of revolutionary violence is to free society from the dictatorship of capital, from at times its invisible but real power over society, and to establish a true democracy. Kautsky did not simply side-step this fundamental conclusion of Marxism in his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. Contradicting the facts, he sought to prove that Marxism did not raise the question of revolutionary violence. And Lenin, therefore, was fully justified in questioning Kautsky's scientific competence and his right to interpret Marx so categorically.

For Marx, the form of government, the state system and the state as the bourgeoisie's weapon of class domination were directly, indissolubly linked. However democratic the form of political government and state system may seem, they both derive from the state as such, from the invisible but real power of capital. Without smashing the state as a weapon of capitalist class domination, it is impossible to impart a qualitatively new content to the form of political government and state system.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 241.

² *Ibid.*, p. 224.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

Kautsky's liberal reflections on "democracy" in general and his "very crude falsification of Marx" in what concerned the bourgeois state were connected with the desire, albeit unsuccessful, to extend the social base of the followers of Marxism. The attempt to persuade the masses that large-scale social reforms are possible without revolutionary violence is a tempting thing, but it is essentially anti-historical and utopian. Indeed, why is it impossible to give effect to the political will of the masses and their wishes to carry out socialist transformations with the aid of the democratic institutions and forms existing under capitalism? From the viewpoint of the class content, these democratic institutions and forms are adapted to safeguard the interests of the ruling class and it is only thus, and not to the detriment of these interests, that they can do the will of the masses.

Amplifying on this thesis of Marxism in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Lenin took the veil off the conceptions that there exists a "pure", neutral democracy under capitalism. He cites examples of the conciliatory policy followed by the leaders of the Second International on the eve and in the years of the First World War and the Mensheviks' activities in the government formed in coalition with the bourgeoisie—the government which insisted on Russia's continued participation in the war. As a result, Lenin proved, the parliamentary factions' "rules of the game" make it impossible to realise the will of the masses and put an end to the

¹ *Ibid.*

power of capital. A proletarian revolution cannot be carried out with the aid of one or several parliamentary actions. The deep changes it must bring about require active political efforts by the masses. In his hopes that the proletariat can gradually assume power, Lenin pointed out, Kautsky forgot that as the motive force of the revolution the parliament was extremely weak. Being a link of the functioning bourgeois state machine, which is solidly chained to Big Business, the parliament is in practice far removed from the political influence of the masses. Its activity, including the struggle of the parliamentary factions and coalitions, as a rule proceeds in the direction suiting the big bourgeoisie, and this rules out the possibility of the parliament being turned into an efficient champion of the political aspirations of the masses.

This naturally does not rule out the need for the political parties of the working class to take part in the struggle at a parliamentary level. The participation of the working-class political parties in the functions of parliaments by no means testifies to the latter being above-class. This participation is essential for the extension of class struggle, for the combination of working-class offensives from "below" and "above", inside the state system, and not for co-operation with the bourgeoisie. The extension of the political bases of the working class in the state sphere is a mighty weapon for weakening the political influence of Big Business in the sections of the state structure where it is especially substantial.

At the same time, the parliamentary struggle waged by the working class and its political

organisations merely creates preconditions for the proletarian revolution but does not replace it. Only the demolition of the state machine and the establishment of the political power of the working class can do away with the rule of the bourgeoisie and alter the class nature of power. Such is the essence of Lenin's view, opposite to that of Kautsky, of the character of the proletarian revolution.

The erroneous absolutisation of the role played by parliament in the practical transformation of the realities put Kautsky as a Marxist in a difficult position. Being a prominent theoretician of the Second International, he could not bypass in silence Marx's well-known statement about the dictatorship of the proletariat in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism without evoking legitimate objections. "Kautsky," Lenin wrote, "must know that both Marx and Engels, in their letters as well as in their published works, repeatedly spoke about the dictatorship of the proletariat, before and especially after the Paris Commune. Kautsky must know that the formula 'dictatorship of the proletariat' is merely a more historically concrete and scientifically exact formulation of the proletariat's task of 'smashing' the bourgeois state machine, about which both Marx and Engels, in summing up the experience of the Revolution of 1848, and, still more so, of 1871, spoke for forty years between 1852 and 1891."¹

Dwelling in detail on Kautsky's interpretation of the Marxist analysis of the biggest revolutions of the 19th century, Lenin above all

established that Kautsky qualified the "classical reasoning of Marx's, which sums up the whole of his revolutionary teaching" as an insignificant argument, as a "slip of the tongue" of no significance for the revolutionary struggle. The reference is to the outstanding conclusion of Marx's revolutionary theory which Lenin fully cited in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*: "Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."² The qualification of this cardinal Marxist conclusion about the need of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat to create political prerequisites for the transition to a new society as a slip of the tongue is, in Lenin's view, "an insult to and complete renunciation of Marxism".³

Moreover, Lenin established that in proof of his own point of view Kautsky tried to present a number of Marx's statements about the dictatorship of the proletariat as devoid of literal sense. Kautsky substantiated this thesis by the allegation that Marx had failed to show in greater detail how he conceived this dictatorship. The dictatorship of the proletariat as defined by Marx, Kautsky said, did not at all mean revolutionary violence, "dictatorialism", but was merely a state of

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 233

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

political power under which most of the members of society would gradually side with the revolution.

Analysing the given proposition, Lenin stressed that "Kautsky the 'Marxist' made this monstrously absurd and untrue statement because he 'forgot' the class struggle",¹ in which the bourgeoisie relies on the existing state machine. Without revolutionary violence capable of smashing this state machine and depriving the bourgeoisie of its mightiest weapon of preserving political rule, the question of the gradual attraction of the majority of the population to the side of the revolution would, Lenin held, remain nothing but a question.

The political rule of the proletariat cannot be confined to bourgeois political forms, even the most democratic, because they always remain a means of exercising the dictatorship and policy of capital. The revolution needs must transcend their framework and radically alter the content and nature of social relations in the socio-political sphere, imparting to these relations the forms that would help effectively solve the task of enlisting the working masses' participation in the socialist reorganisation of society.

From this angle Lenin analysed yet another of Kautsky's arguments about the need of a "democratic" way to socialism. Literally, Kautsky declared, Marx did not interpret the dictatorship of the proletariat as a dictatorship, but merely as a state of class domination and, consequently, democracy, for a class cannot exercise dictatorship. Such an inter-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

pretation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin said, was absolutely abstract in character and did not bring any clarity into the question of the nature of the political power of the proletariat. With Kautsky it was rather a matter of achieving a state of formally democratic but not real political rule of the proletariat. Consonant above all with the real rule of the working class is the new type of statehood and only then the form of political government.

A revolution cannot be carried out either in circumvention of the bourgeois state machine or through its parliamentary "millstone", as Kautsky dreamed. To fulfil its political tasks, the proletarian revolution must smash the bourgeois state machine. It gives rise to a new rule, i.e., a new political superstructure, and creates its own political means: its revolutionary legality and its democracy. The new democracy differs from the bourgeois democracy not only by its social class essence, but also by the fact that it is created by the broad masses.

Summing up all of Marx's important ideas about the political tasks of the proletarian revolution that Kautsky had "overlooked", Lenin thus expressed the essence of the Marxist view of this question: "The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie."² In a society with class antagonisms, Lenin said, there always operated a logic of struggle which could not fit into a single system of rules for the opposing sides. The institutions through which the bourgeoisie

² *Ibid.*, p. 236.

is accustomed to wage political struggle do not accord with the interests of the proletariat's class struggle. The political obstacles on the road to new society are destroyed in the process of the proletarian revolution and organs of the masses' political initiative and independent activity take shape. He is a Marxist, Lenin said, who extends recognition of the struggle of the classes to recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In ensuring the transition from capitalism to socialism in a revolutionary way, the dictatorship of the proletariat with its violence towards counter-revolution openly acts in the capacity of a force that remakes society.

The replacement of the bourgeois political superstructure by a statehood of socialist type does not mean at all that revolutionary violence opposes democratic gains. On the contrary, it creates a new, higher type of democracy. Marxism teaches that in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism violence is necessary not only in order to defend democratic rights and freedoms, but also to break the resistance of the exploiters which rests on the system of bourgeois political rule, including the institutions of bourgeois democracy.

The proletariat's revolutionary violence is thus not an end in itself, but a means of preparing the political ground for and achieving genuine democracy. Commenting on this highly important thesis of Marxism, Lenin wrote: "There can be no real, actual equality until all possibility of the exploitation of one class by another has been totally destroyed."¹

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

Exposing a whole number of obvious discrepancies in Kautsky's concept of the Marxist interpretation of the creative role of violence in the proletarian revolution, Lenin noted: "By so 'interpreting' the concept 'revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat' as to expunge the revolutionary violence of the oppressed class against its oppressors, Kautsky has beaten the world record in the liberal distortion of Marx."²

Apropos of the Creative Attitude Towards Marxism

In *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* Lenin drew attention to the creative way Marxism should be applied in the revolutionary practice of the proletariat. And that was not accidental. In his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* Kautsky created a conception that clearly did not accord with the Marxist theory as applied to the new historical conditions when he sought to describe the latest developments in the proletariat's revolutionary struggle at the turn of this century. Lenin came out strongly against Kautsky's conception. Contraposing the "democratic" way to socialism to the dictatorship of the proletariat, Kautsky also alleged that in the late 1870s Marx considered it politically possible that "in Britain and America the transition might take place peacefully."³

² *Ibid.*, p. 242.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 238.

Lenin dwelt in detail on this political assumption of Marx's and showed that Kautsky had simplified it. The latter failed to see that Marx had by no means contraposed peaceful transition to revolutionary violence, but proceeded from the multiplicity of political forms of struggle for power and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletarian revolution is an act of violence, whether it be carried out by armed force or peacefully. And common to both ways is the demolition of the bourgeois state machine and its substitution by a state of a new type.

The experience of the biggest political battles fought by the proletariat at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, and particularly that of the Great October Socialist Revolution, led Lenin to conclude that this Marxist thesis was still valid. The success of revolutionary transformations in any concrete historical conditions decisively depended on the resolute actions against the reactionary forces. In the period of the revolution, at the height of the class struggle, the guarantees offered by bourgeois democracy are on the whole of a formal nature and do not by themselves ensure the success of the revolution. Disregarding everything, the reactionary forces violate all constitutional provisions and use every means of visible and invisible but real power to create conditions for the restoration of the moribund system.

Consequently, the conquest of power both by peaceful means and by armed force entails revolutionary violence against the reactionary forces and their counter-revolutionary actions,

be they in the form of armed resistance to the revolution or "passive" sabotage of it. In the course of the non-peaceful political transition this violence with the view to neutralising counter-revolution assumes the form of armed force. In the conditions of the peaceful transition to socialism the methods that prevail are chiefly those of revolutionary legal coercion, political ways and means of defence capable of reducing to nought in such a situation the actions of the inveterate opponents of social changes.

The difference between the peaceful and non-peaceful ways of proletarian revolution does not lie at all in the negation of the need to smash the bourgeois state machine. The difference is that the peaceful establishment of socialist-type statehood usually accords with certain concrete historical conditions of the class struggle. The peaceful way is possible if the working class is capable of overcoming the resistance of the class enemy relatively easily and of simultaneously quickly expanding the political bases of revolutionary power. All this, however, is feasible only if the political forces of the revolution enjoy a clear superiority over the bourgeoisie and its leverages.

Lenin also pointed to the fact that after identifying the revolution with this form of political struggle for power, Kautsky equated it to the formula of the parliamentary road to socialism. He declared, moreover, that the higher the level of democratisation of society's institutions, the more the proletariat could hope for success in the

accomplishment of the political revolution. This allegedly was both a sign and a prerequisite of the state's and the proletariat's ripeness for socialism.

Disproving Kautsky's allegation, Lenin explained that because of its class nature bourgeois democracy cannot be an indicator of the political maturity of the working class and its readiness cardinally to transform the political superstructure. Even in the conditions of the most "representative" bourgeois democracy the working class may be solidly integrated in the bourgeois political system and possess a rather low level of political awareness. Besides, the red tape inherent in bourgeois democracy and to a certain extent the archaism of its social structures prevent the working masses from taking an active part in politics. This, in its turn, enables the bourgeois ruling element to take upon themselves the realisation of some urgent aspects of society's development with the minimum participation of the working class and to slow down the latter's political development. Such "revolutions" from above usually do not influence the nature of the political superstructure, being essentially an expression of compromise among the different political groups of the ruling class.

Moreover, in any political situation that is critical for the ruling class the successful development of the revolution has never been determined by the degree of society's democratisation and the intensity of inner-parliamentary struggle. Practice shows that events may shape out differently in a revolu-

tionary situation, and parliament cannot influence them even in the most favourable conditions for it. If the proletariat wages a revolutionary struggle solely to gain control of parliament, this leads to the curtailment of the masses' historical initiative and their constructive political activity. As a result, the reactionary forces find more possibilities to get out of a tight situation, impose their political will upon the entire ruling class, and create a united front of the counter-revolutionary forces.

Building a new society, the proletarian revolution needs the masses' independent political activity that transcends the narrow parliamentary framework. Citing the experience of the October Revolution in proof of this Marxist thesis, Lenin wrote: "... revolution is one continuous and moreover desperate struggle, and the proletariat is the vanguard class of all the oppressed, the focus and centre of all the aspirations of all the oppressed for their emancipation! Naturally, therefore, the Soviets, as the organ of the struggle of the oppressed people, reflected and expressed the moods and changes of opinions of these people ever so much more quickly, fully, and faithfully than any other institution."¹

Lenin also noted another aspect of Kautsky's errors. According to Marx, revolutions are always distinguished by the intensity of the class struggle. This intensity is linked with the dynamic development of crisis situations, and that makes possible exceptionally fast

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

political changes. Proletarian revolutions are no exception. The rapid sequence of events, transition from one stage of revolutionary struggle to another, and regrouping of the opposing forces all predetermine the nature and methods of the proletariat's struggle and the quick change in the ways of revolutionary action—peaceful and non-peaceful methods of political struggle. Parliamentary leverages are clearly not enough to control the development of political events in the direction required by the revolution. Only a broad democracy of the revolutionary masses, unaffected by lengthy ideological disputes and official parliamentary procedures, can react quickly to political processes. This democracy is distinguished by political realism and revolutionary creativity, by the broad political perspectives opening up before the working class. The revolutionary democracy of the proletariat is an effective means of pursuing a mobile revolutionary policy.

Stressing the need of a constructive attitude to Marxism in the new historical conditions, Lenin showed in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* what errors Kautsky's deviation from this thesis had led him to. Kautsky turned into a general formula of the proletarian revolution Marx's political assumption that it was possible for the proletariat to win power peacefully in some countries in the latter half of the 19th century. He refused to see the peculiarities of that historical period and regarded them as general conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat. "Was there in the seventies anything which made England and America

exception in regard to what we are now discussing?" Lenin wrote. "It will be obvious to anyone at all familiar with the requirements of science in regard to the problems of history that this question must be put. To fail to put it is tantamount to falsifying science, to engaging in sophistry, and, the question having been put, there can be no doubt as to the reply: the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is violence against the bourgeoisie; and the necessity of such violence is particularly called for, as Marx and Engels have repeatedly explained in detail (especially in *The Civil War in France* and in the preface to it), by the existence of militarism and a bureaucracy. But it is precisely these institutions that were non-existent in Britain and America in the seventies, when Marx made his observations (they do exist in Britain and in America now).¹ The peaceful transition of power to the proletariat in Britain and the United States was possible, Marx said, not because the democratic institutions in those countries were developed, but because they had no powerful military-police apparatus and political bureaucracy.

Consequently, Marx deemed the peaceful transition to socialism possible when the state machine of repression was weak or weakened or paralysed by a considerable military superiority of the forces on the side of the revolution.

In his ideological dispute with Kautsky, Lenin proceeded directly from these criteria of determining the ability of the ruling class

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

to resist the revolution and dictate its political will. These criteria found confirmation in the revolutionary process in Russia from February to October 1917. Thus, there was a real possibility for a peaceful transition of power to the working people immediately after the overthrow of tsarism in February 1917, when the bourgeois-democratic revolution disrupted the work of the repressive bodies. This and other factors (the siding of revolutionary-minded soldiers and sailors with the revolution, forming of armed units of the working class, etc.) offered a political prospect for the peaceful development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. "This course would have been the least painful, and it was therefore necessary to fight for it most energetically," Lenin wrote at that time.¹

Nevertheless, at the beginning of the summer of 1917 the Bolsheviks were compelled temporarily to give up the idea of politically orienting upon the peaceful development of the proletarian revolution. Because of the conciliatory policy vis-à-vis the bourgeoisie followed by the Mensheviks (Kautsky's ideological fellow-travellers) and with their direct connivance, the reactionary forces succeeded in using the partly restored state machine of coercion in their interest. A counter-revolutionary uprising was staged by the monarchists in August 1917. After its rout by the forces of the revolution the situation took such a shape that Lenin said

"the Bolsheviks will do *everything* to secure this *peaceful* development of the revolution".²

In the subsequent period directly preceding the October Revolution the Bolsheviks justified concern for the destinies of the revolution led them to alter their tactics in favour of an armed uprising. The aim was totally to destroy the apparatus of repression. "If there is an absolutely undisputed lesson of the revolution, one fully proved by facts," Lenin wrote in this connection, "it is that only an alliance of the Bolsheviks with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, only an immediate transfer of all power to the Soviets would make civil war in Russia impossible."³ However, the Mensheviks' conciliatory policy became a permanent obstruction to the peaceful transition of power to the Soviets.

Creatively defending the Marxist thesis about the diversity of political forms of the proletariat's struggle for power, Lenin at the same time showed that enchantment with parliamentarism had turned Kautsky the theoretician into a dogmatist. "Kautsky the 'historian' so shamelessly falsifies history," he wrote, "that he 'forgets' the fundamental fact that pre-monopoly capitalism—which actually reached its zenith in the seventies—was by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits, which found most typical expression in Britain and in America, distinguished by a relatively speaking, maximum fondness for peace and freedom. Imperialism, on the other hand, i.e.,

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Moscow, 1977, p. 187.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow, 1977, p. 41.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

monopoly capitalism, which finally matured only in the twentieth century, is, by virtue of its fundamental economic traits, distinguished by a minimum fondness for peace and freedom, and by a maximum and universal development of militarism."¹

It followed therefrom, Lenin explained, that one inherent trait of the imperialist stage of the development of capitalism was the tendency to political reaction which immeasurably restricted the possibility of a peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism and practically removed temporarily from the agenda the question of the extent to which a peaceful way of winning power "is typical or probable".² This conclusion, moreover, followed from the law of uneven economic and political development of different countries at the stage of imperialism which Lenin had discovered. Though the objective conditions for socialist reorganisation may be ripe, the concrete possibilities for effectuating a revolution may differ entirely from country to country. The greater the social tension engendered by a local complex of social contradictions and the impact produced on it by inter-imperialist rivalry, the more realistic these possibilities.

This consideration should be borne in mind, Lenin held, when choosing the political form of the revolution. "If the exploiters are defeated in one country only, and this, of course, is typical, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they *still* remain stronger than the

exploited, for the international connections of the exploiters are enormous."³ At the very first breach of the capitalist system only an incredible concurrence of circumstances could create conditions for the peaceful development of the revolution. That is why Lenin then qualified the peaceful form of development of the proletarian revolution as a highly rare historical possibility and gave preference to the armed form of struggle for power. In that historical situation this form better enabled the revolution to defend itself from the designs of the internal and external reactionary forces than if the transition to socialist transformations were effected peacefully.

The events occurring in Russia on the eve and after the Great October Socialist Revolution confirmed the correctness of Lenin's prediction about the practicable forms of breaching the capitalist system and defending the world's first worker and peasant state. On the one hand, Russia turned out to be not only the focal point of extremely acute contradictions of imperialism, but also its weakest link. On the other hand, the Bolsheviks chose the right course in the proletarian revolution in Russia. It rested on the combination of different forms of political struggle for power and primarily on the use of the non-peaceful way. This course prevented the local reactionary forces from adapting to the political situation and reversing the course of events. An effective obstacle was raised to the international reactionary forces'

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 239.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

political and military adventures against Soviet Russia.

The practice of radical social transformations confirms even now that Lenin was right in criticising Kautsky's views of the way of effecting a proletarian revolution. There is no easy way to power. History shows that in their struggle for the socialist renovation of society the revolutionary forces meet with the same general problems as those which manifested themselves in the process of the proletarian revolution in Russia and were analysed by Lenin in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. These problems sooner or later arise on the road to power, whatever the conditions in which a revolution takes place, making the peaceful form of struggle for socialism incredibly complicated and tense. As the practice of political struggle shows, the appearance and expansion of objective possibilities for a peaceful revolution in the present conditions cannot be automatically conceived as factors having the same impact on the balance of political forces in all the regions of the world. The sharpness of the problems arising on the peaceful path of struggle for socialism depends on the balance of forces between socialism and capitalism on the international political scene. Incidentally, it is simultaneously dependent on socio-economic and political factors which exist in one or another region of the world, one or another country, and which cannot be underestimated.

Contemporary political lessons smash into smithereens the Kautskyite myth cultivated by many liberals and social-reformists that

there are no conflicts and no crises on the parliamentary way to socialism. Imperialism has not lost or altered its aggressive nature. On the contrary, seeking to retain "vitaly important" spheres of influence, it continues to stake on the build-up of the military and bureaucratic might of the reactionary forces and opposes even the most modest bourgeois-democratic reforms. This confirms Marx's prevision that the revolution will advance, overcoming the united counter-revolutionary forces. Lenin's theses about the creative development of Marxism allow to make a timely choice of the forms of revolutionary struggle for power. Lenin taught skilfully to combine them, relying on the revolutionary initiative and political creative activity of the broad masses.

The Role of the Masses in the Proletarian Revolution

Lenin dwelt in detail on Kautsky's interpretation of the question concerning the role of the masses in the proletarian revolution. In formulating his attitude to this key Marxist question, Kautsky referred to Marx's assessment of the experience of the Paris Commune. According to this appraisal, Kautsky held, the Paris Commune was the result of the "democratic" struggle of the proletarian masses. Moreover, as Lenin rightly noted, Kautsky completely overlooked the concrete historical conditions in which the Paris Commune came into existence and, specifically, the division of Paris into two belligerent camps—the Commune and Versailles.

Proceeding from just one fact that the Commune was elected by universal suffrage, Kautsky proclaimed that "the dictatorship of the proletariat was for Marx" (or: according to Marx) "a condition which necessarily follows from pure democracy, if the proletariat forms the majority".¹ Amplifying on this idea, Kautsky went so far as to say that the proletarian revolution would commit a suicide if it impinged upon universal suffrage which allegedly was a deep source of its powerful moral authority.

Analysing this thesis of Kautsky's, Lenin clearly noted that it evoked a great deal of objection. Kautsky who had Marxism "off pat", Lenin recalled, unpardonably easily bypassed in silence, for example, the appraisal of the Paris Commune by Engels. He completely forgot the conclusion drawn by Engels that "a revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is... Would the Paris Commune have lasted more than a day if it had not used the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Cannot we, on the contrary, blame it for having made too little use of that authority?"²

An attentive and detailed examination of the arguments adduced by Kautsky to confirm that it is allegedly possible to reorganise a capitalist society into a socialist one by a simple vote, thanks to the electoral superiority of the proletarian majority over the exploitive minority, proves them to be invalid, Lenin said. "Marx and Engels analysed the

Paris Commune in a most detailed manner and showed that its merit lay in its attempt to smash, to break up the 'ready-made state machinery'. Marx and Engels considered this conclusion to be so important that this was the only amendment they introduced in 1872 into the 'obsolete' (in parts) programme of the *Communist Manifesto*. Marx and Engels showed that the Paris Commune had abolished the army and the bureaucracy, had abolished *parliamentarism*, had destroyed 'that parasitic excrescence, the state', etc."³

Citing the experience of the October Revolution, Lenin showed what role the masses played in the revolution and, in his turn, revealed the nature of its reverse impact on the political development of the masses. This analysis played an important role in completing the ideological rout of Kautsky's attempt at a liberal revision of Marxist theory. The result was the dissipation of his ideological myth of the incompatibility of Marxism and the political course of Bolshevism in the proletarian revolution.

According to this myth, the Bolsheviks could not be called Marxists because, not being backed by the majority of the population, they had allegedly disregarded Marx's precept and infringed upon democracy by dispersing the Constituent Assembly and "seizing" power in Russia. Actually, as Lenin proved in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, the conquest of power in Russia was a logical consequence of the complex regrouping of social and class forces in the country,

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

² *Ibid.*, p. 240.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

which ended in the overwhelming majority of the working people siding with the revolution. Such a process is characteristic of every real revolution.

Unfortunately, Lenin said, Kautsky had failed to see this actual process. Hypnotised by the ideals of formal bourgeois equality, he completely forgot that "universal suffrage sometimes produces petty-bourgeois, sometimes reactionary and counter-revolutionary parliaments".¹ Kautsky thus reduced the masses to the status of ordinary supernumeraries on the political stage. "He does not even raise the question of a class analysis of the Soviets on the one hand, and of the Constituent Assembly on the other," Lenin wrote. "It is therefore impossible to argue, to debate with Kautsky. All we can do is demonstrate to the reader why Kautsky cannot be called anything else but a renegade."²

Explaining this, Lenin said that the leading role in a revolution is played not by a formal majority, but by the actual majority which really backs the revolution at one or another stage of its development. The difference for the destinies of the revolution between these forms of mass political conduct fully manifested itself in October 1917. The formula of formal parliamentary majority no longer worked as a "barometer" of the masses' frame of mind. The masses linked their vital aspirations and urge for social changes not with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, but with the Soviets and, Lenin

wrote, expressed them at the Second and Third Congresses of Soviets in October 1917 and January 1918. Both of these congresses, he said, "had demonstrated as clear as clear could be that the people had swung to the left, had become revolutionised, had turned away from the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and had passed over to the side of the Bolsheviks; that is, had turned away from petty-bourgeois leadership, from the illusion that it was possible to reach a compromise with the bourgeoisie, and had joined the revolutionary struggle".¹

Consequently, the will of the revolutionary majority had found its own political expression by the time the Constituent Assembly was convened. Without having recourse to formal, bourgeois democracy, the vast majority of the country's population voiced their sympathy with the Bolsheviks' political course through the Soviets, their own organs of power. Unlike the Mensheviks' conciliatory policy, this course combined the socialist tasks of the proletariat with the countrywide urge for immediate peace and the peasants' demand for radical agrarian reforms without any delay. Characterising the period of the revolution when the general democratic tasks had been fulfilled and the problem of real majority took on a different form, Lenin wrote that "if the Bolshevik proletariat had tried at once, in October-November 1917, without waiting for the class differentiation in the rural districts, without being able to prepare it and bring it about, to 'decree' a civil

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

² *Ibid.*

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

war or the 'introduction of socialism' in the rural districts, had tried to do without a temporary bloc with the peasants in general, without making a number of concessions to the middle peasants etc., that would have been a *Blanquist* distortion of Marxism, an attempt by the minority to impose its will upon the majority; it would have been a theoretical absurdity, revealing a failure to understand that a general peasant revolution is *still* a bourgeois revolution, and that *without* a series of *transitions, of transitional stages*, it cannot be transformed into a socialist revolution in a backward country."¹

There is a profound meaning in these words of Lenin's: a revolution cannot expect guarantees from the mood in parliament. The main thing is to determine the leading tendency in the position and in the political conduct of the masses in the given historical situation. It is precisely on this basis, and not simply through the formation of coalition cabinets with the bourgeoisie, that a policy of effective class alliances is worked out and the question of the real motive forces of the revolution and its active political majority is solved. The result is the growth of the ability of the revolutionary forces to take joint action, to make use of political compromises and to avoid the "traps" set from time to time by formal, bourgeois democracy to divert the revolutionary clan of the masses into the safest channels.

Of great value in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* are Lenin's ideas

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

about the formation of the political majority in the course of the proletarian revolution. As the revolution deepens, the established political structures of society break up, its social components become more mobile, and additional resources for the masses' political activity are revealed. This was the case in Russia in the summer and autumn of 1918, when bourgeois-democratic transformations in the countryside developed into a socialist revolution. Kautsky took a superficial glance at this process and interpreted it as the secession of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries from the revolution, as a "narrowing" of the circle of those who politically supported the Bolsheviks. Actually, as Lenin pointed out, "scores and scores of millions of the village poor were freeing themselves from the tutelage and influence of the kulaks and village bourgeoisie and were awakening to *independent political life*!" This process revealed in practice the difference between the determination of the formal majority of the backers of the revolution by means of a simple vote and the real majority forming as a result of the awakening of new socio-economic and political requirements in the masses by the revolution.

In Lenin's analysis, the revolution is depicted as both an avalanche and a multistage development. The accumulation of political experience by the masses to capture the next line is combined with the solution of the immediate tasks of socialist construction. Each stage marks, as it were, an influx of new social forces into the revolution, enrich-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 304.

ing it and opening up new perspectives for the historical creativity of the masses.

Time shows that Lenin was absolutely right in exposing Kautsky's speculations "that in a revolution which is at all profound and serious the issue is decided simply by the relation between the majority and the minority".¹ And Lenin concluded: "This historical truth is that in every profound revolution, the prolonged, stubborn and desperate resistance of the exploiters, who for a number of years retain important practical advantages over the exploited, is the rule."² This means that the political foundation for the further expansion of the mass basis of the revolution is laid not by the simple formation of the parliamentary political majority of the supporters of the revolution, but by the direct participation of the mass political forces in it. Only profound changes in the political conduct of the masses and their direct involvement in political life, and not only in voting, can deprive the ruling class of the levers of power it still holds.

The political majority determined by an election does not reflect all the complexity of social and class ties and the heterogeneity of the social components of the political structure, of the forces taking part in the revolution. Orientation upon it may deprive revolution of dynamism, manoeuvrability and the ability to win over new political and class allies in good time. Incidentally, there exists a possibility of turning a formal

political majority into a real majority of active supporters of the revolution. This possibility depends decisively on the activities of the most progressive forces of the revolution and their ability to stimulate the creative revolutionary potential of the political majority.

The moral authority of the revolution, Lenin held, was in its effectual ability to mobilise and organise the masses to build a new society and not in observance of the norms of formal democracy. The problem of formal democracy in the proletarian revolution in Russia was solved in specific historical conditions. Universal suffrage was partially restricted there—the exploitive minority was deprived of the right to vote. In other countries, Lenin said repeatedly, the revolution's attitude to formal democracy could be different.

Saying that the destinies of the revolution did not depend on chance, Lenin, following Marx's example, contraposed the democracy of the revolutionary proletariat to formal bourgeois democracy. He proved in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* that the problem of winning over the political majority for the revolution did not consist in acquiring the passive support of the masses, but in actually drawing them into the process of the socialist reorganisation of society. When political power passes quickly and fully to the working class, the problem of enlisting the participation of the masses in independent political activity is solved relatively simply. The political power of the working class creates the necessary socio-political conditions for the expansion

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

² *Ibid.*, p. 254.

of the mass base of the revolution. In these conditions, influenced by the advantages of the proletarian revolutionary democracy, the mass allies of the proletariat are ready to identify their vital interests and aims not with those of bourgeois democracy, but with the tasks of socialist construction. By their socio-economic and political status in society, the proletariat's mass allies are not capable of actively joining the struggle for socialism immediately. And in the conditions of the proletariat's political rule they quickly acquire political experience which leads them to accept the socialist alternative.

The intention to initiate socialist transformations on a strictly electoral platform is fraught with the danger of losing the formal political support of the masses and may lead to the split of the nascent political majority. This is probably one of the most complicated problems of the peaceful proletarian revolution when the old political structures are demolished not all at once but gradually, leaving the exploiter class the possibility of regrouping its forces and activating the political struggle in different fields, including the sphere of public opinion. The electoral system is not enough in order successfully to neutralise the attempts of the exploiter class to restore its political rule. For that it is necessary to have a stable and flexible political mechanism, reliably supported by the mass forces, to defend the peaceful revolution. The political majority won in an election cannot by itself replace this political mechanism; it itself requires protection from the anti-constitutional intrigues of reaction. This protection may be

ensured only by the revolutionary bodies of the masses which are capable of suppressing any violence by the reactionary forces.

The Proletarian Revolution and Internationalism

The community of the vital interests of the working class in the struggle for the revolutionary renovation of the world finds practical expression in proletarian internationalism. The latter comes into existence and develops together with the international working-class movement.

One of the sections of *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* is specially devoted to the tasks of proletarian solidarity in the epoch of the crisis of the capitalist system, proletarian revolutions and the upswing of the national liberation movement ushered in by the Great October Revolution. Lenin showed the essence of his differences with Kautsky over the questions of proletarian internationalism. He first pointed out that, on the political plane, Kautsky approached the questions of proletarian solidarity from a purely sectarian angle. While advocating the need to united political action by the international working class, Kautsky in reality approved the reformist strategy and tactics the Russian Mensheviks had chosen to direct the struggle of the working class.

Kautsky's sympathy with the political course of the enemies of the revolution in Russia, Lenin proved, completely exposed his apostasy. His approval of reformism in the conditions of the revolutionary situation in Russia meant nothing

but negation of the principle of proletarian internationalism, non-participation in revolutionary action and support of the slogans of petty-bourgeois nationalism. This position of Kautsky's manifested itself especially clearly in his appraisals of the differences in the Bolshevik and Menshevik tactics in relation to the imperialist war of 1914-18. Lenin aptly qualified Kautsky's attitude towards internationalism: "When Kautsky was still a Marxist, for example, in 1909, when he wrote his *Road to Power*, it was the idea that war would inevitably lead to revolution that he advocated, and he spoke of the approach of an *era of revolutions*. The Basle Manifesto of 1912 plainly and definitely speaks of a *proletarian revolution* in connection with that very imperialist war between the German and the British groups which actually broke out in 1914. But in 1918, when revolutions did begin in connection with the war, Kautsky, instead of explaining that they were inevitable, instead of pondering over and thinking out the *revolutionary* tactics and the ways and means of preparing for revolution, began to describe the reformist tactics of the Mensheviks as internationalism. Isn't this apostasy?"¹

Citing concrete examples of class struggle, Lenin showed that Kautsky's essentially sectarian consolidation with the Mensheviks was a logical link in the chain of his deviation from Marxism. Kautsky, for instance, approved the Mensheviks' insistence on the need to establish a republicanism army under the command of the officers of the old army. At the same time they

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

accused the Bolsheviks of "sabotaging" this demand, a thing which had allegedly led to the disintegration, "disorganisation" of the Russian army. Prejudicially appraising the Bolshevik actions, Lenin said, Kautsky apparently forgot Marxism which affirmed that "not a single great revolution has ever taken place, or ever can take place" without the "disorganisation", active "neutralisation" of the old army. "The first commandment, as Marx and Engels repeatedly emphasised, was to smash the old army, dissolve it and replace it by a new one," Lenin continued.² The old army was the most ossified means of upholding a régime that had outlived itself, solid bulwark of its order. Only by forming its own military-political organisations and army can a revolution safeguard its gains. Lenin said, citing the experience of the first year of Soviet power. This experience proved that the modification of the army without any serious reorganisation of its structure and command personnel jeopardised the gains of the revolution and preserved the ground for the restoration of the former political order. The nucleus of the counter-revolution in Russia, alongside the forces of intervention, was the old army officer corps which unleashed a civil war in the country.

Characterising Kautsky's attitude to internationalism, Lenin showed that it was to a large extent imbued with the spirit of provincialism and inability to analyse the epoch that was setting in. Absorbed by schemes, by planning proletarian revolutions in the distant future,

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 285.

Kautsky became divorced from the realities. He began to interpret proletarian internationalism in past-tense categories, adapting it to the conditions of the pre-monopoly stage of capitalism, when capitalist countries were developing economically and politically in a relatively same way. In those conditions a proletarian revolution in any one country could, with the support of the working class of other countries, grow into a world revolution.

The character of the international tasks of the working class alters at the imperialist stage of capitalism. The uneven socio-economic and political development of capitalist countries and the existence of regions at qualitatively different levels of development place the national contingents of the proletariat in different conditions. In different countries proletarian revolution cannot win simultaneously. This makes the process of the revolutionary renovation of the world one of many phases and long, and ushers in a whole multistage epoch of mankind's transition from capitalism to socialism. Such conditions complicate the historical role of proletarian internationalism. On the one hand, one of its tasks is international support by the working people of the gains and achievements of victorious proletarian revolutions. On the other, the countries building socialism are solidary with the struggle waged by the working people in the capitalist part of the world and with national liberation movements.

Differing with Lenin about the nature of imperialism and the tasks of proletarian internationalism, Kautsky held that the time was not yet ripe for proletarian revolutions. In his

opinion, it was necessary to prepare long for the so-called ultra-imperialist stage of capitalism, at which conditions would allegedly again appear for simultaneous victory of the proletarian revolution in many countries within a relatively brief period.

Though he preserved the semblance of continuity of Marx's supposition that a simultaneous victory of the proletarian revolution in the capitalist countries was possible in the latter half of the 19th century, Kautsky was not clear about the socio-political essence of the imperialist stage of capitalism. He drew an erroneous theoretical conclusion about the renunciation of the revolutionary struggle, with the ensuing mistaken theses concerning the role of proletarian internationalism. He reduced the latter to solidarity of the proletarian masses waiting for "favourable" prerequisites for a world proletarian revolution. In other words, he turned proletarian internationalism into an empty abstraction.

To wait for the mythical stage of ultra-imperialism, when the proletariat of the most developed capitalist countries says its decisive word in the struggle for socialism, is to commit a gross theoretical mistake. "If the war," Lenin wrote about the First World War, "is a reactionary imperialist war, that is, if it is being waged by two world groups of the imperialist, rapacious, predatory, reactionary bourgeoisie... my duty as a representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare for the *world proletarian revolution* as the *only* escape from the horrors of a world slaughter."¹

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

The touchstone of genuine internationalism is thus prevention of the horrors of world wars. But it is not enough to proclaim this aim. Its achievement presupposes the renovation of the world and, consequently, the use of all the possibilities for the revolution. "There is no other way of getting out of an imperialist war, as also out of an imperialist predatory peace," Lenin wrote.¹ These words are highly meaningful—revolution and peaceful future are indivisible. Lenin wrote that "Bolshevism has indicated the right road of escape from the horrors of war and imperialism".²

Lenin disclosed the international significance of the experience of the proletarian revolution in Russia. He refuted Kautsky's allegation that this experience deserved no attention and that the Russian revolution did not merit international support because, in Kautsky's opinion, it was not purely proletarian by nature. According to Kautsky, the Bolsheviks set hopes on the West in the matter of victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia, a country with a predominantly peasant population. The absence of mass revolutionary actions by the proletariat in Europe at the time he wrote his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* gave Kautsky grounds to speak of the "deformation" of the proletarian revolution in Russia into a spontaneous peasant movement.

It should be said that the possibility of a revolutionary situation in Europe was no simple invention of the Bolsheviks, but had already been the subject of Marxist theory. What is

more, the revolutionary situation came. The hunger and ruin created everywhere by the war led to a sharp Leftward swing of the masses. "The revolution is growing in a number of European countries, and growing under everybody's eyes and very rapidly at that."³ That is why even before the end of the First World War, Lenin wrote, the Bolsheviks' tactics, which led to the victory of the revolution, were correct; they were "the only internationalist tactics, because they did the utmost possible in one country for the development, support and awakening of the revolution in all countries".⁴ Consequently, the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks facilitate the transition to socialism in other countries as no other tactics employed so far in the class struggle.

First, these tactics "have been justified by their enormous success, for Bolshevism (not by any means because of the merits of the Russian Bolsheviks, but because of the most profound sympathy of the people everywhere for tactics that are revolutionary in practice) has become world Bolshevism, has produced an idea, a theory, a programme and tactics which differ concretely and in practice from those of social-chauvinism and social-pacifism".⁵

Secondly, bearing in mind the experience of the epoch of revolutions that has set in, Bolshevism has shown "by the example of Soviet government that the workers and poor peasants, even of a backward country, even with the least experience, education and habits of organi-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

² *Ibid.*, p. 294.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

⁵ *Ibid.*

sation, *have been able* for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst a struggle against the exploiters (who were supported by the bourgeoisie of the whole world), to maintain the power of the working people, to create a democracy that is immeasurably higher and broader than all previous democracies in the world, and to start the creative work of tens of millions of workers and peasants for the practical construction of socialism".¹

Revealing that broad class alliances of the proletariat at a national level were fruitful, Lenin emphasised the major significance of joint action by the working class and the non-proletarian revolutionary forces on an international scale. He underscored the international importance of the then nascent national liberation struggle. The leaders of the Second International, including Kautsky, did not show much interest in this issue and in no way linked it with the struggle for socialism.

Life has shown that Lenin was absolutely right. Kautsky's prediction about the time when a proletarian revolution in industrial capitalist countries would bring general well-being to the colonies did not come true.

Seeking to prevent its positions in the world from growing weaker, imperialism is looking with the aid of the institutions of bourgeois power for new ways, means and possibilities of dictating its conditions to the newly-free countries. This in its turn, just as Lenin foresaw, presupposes the activation of the international efforts of all the present-day revolutionary forces. Distorting the substance

of Lenin's theses, contemporary bourgeois ideologists affirm that he was disappointed in the European working class because of the absence of proletarian revolutions and accused part of it of "aristocratism". Hence their automatic conclusion that the Bolshevik experience was acceptable only to countries with undeveloped capitalist relations.

The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky refutes such allegations. Lenin's analysis of the class struggle in 1918 shows that the working class of the industrial countries was giving internationalist, essentially revolutionary support to the struggle for the social renovation of the world. It is against the main forces of reaction in possession of powerful military and ideological means and thus facilitates the advance of the revolutionary forces on the weakest sectors of the capitalist system. At the same time the working class amasses experience in the revolutionary struggle for its emancipation in the citadels of capitalism too.

Lenin revealed that the constant expansion and consolidation of ties between existing and maturing proletarian revolutions and national liberation movements were a historical law-governed development. Prerequisites for the revolutionary renovation of the world operate equally in the most developed zones of capitalism and in other regions of the world. Past experience shows that the struggle for socialism will not be successful if it is not based everywhere on the conscious revolutionary initiative and creativeness of the broad masses and does not lead to the complete establishment of a new type of democracy—socialist democracy. This

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

now prompts one to turn again to the invaluable theses in Lenin's *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kausky*, to Lenin's disquisitions upon the state and democracy.

3. SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY AND BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY

The word "democracy" is one of the key terms in the contemporary political lexicon. Today one can hardly get along without it in analysing any political phenomena, of whatever significance, for the problems linked with democracy are invariably in the focus of the struggle of classes and parties and serve as a "battlefield" in the conflict of ideologies.

Democratic ideas in the present-day world are extremely popular. Only the extremely reactionary political forces—fascists and ultra-Left radicals—today openly dissociate themselves from thousand-year-old values of democracy. Democracy is also defended by word of mouth even by representatives of the anti-popular dictatorial regimes in Latin America who brutally deal with all manifestations of opposition "in the name of democracy," as well as by the South African racists who, also "in the name of democracy", pursue the inhuman apartheid policy and wage an undeclared war on independent African nations.

The question, therefore, is not who is "for" democracy and who is "against" it, but one which interpretation is correct and which is a subtle ideological falsification, what society is best able to ensure the realisation of democratic ideals and what society uses these ideals as

political cover for its anti-democratic nature.

Bourgeois propaganda insistently links the destinies of democracy with the destinies of capitalism. Offering the young developing countries "the values of Western democracy" as an example to be followed, they spare no colour to blacken the political systems of the socialist countries and the Asian and African states that have rejected the path of capitalist development. The aim of the specialists in "psychological warfare" is utterly clear: to hamper the growth of influence socialism exerts on people's minds and to sow distrust in and hostility towards it by all possible means. First to be attacked are the gains of socialist democracy in the Soviet Union. Suffice it to recall the "flare-up" of the propaganda campaign in defence of Western democracy, timed by its organisers to coincide with the moment of the discussion and adoption in 1977 of the new USSR Constitution which reflects the profound democratism of a state of the whole people in the period of developed socialism, the broad socio-economic, political and personal rights and freedoms of Soviet citizens.

In their ideological sabotage against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and states of socialist orientation, reactionary bourgeois propagandists have recourse ever more frequently to the pseudo-scientific theoretical schemes of all sorts of specialists in "non-Western societies" and apologists of "Western democracy" from among historians, politologists and jurists. Their objective is to persuade their readers and audiences that democracy can exist only in the conditions of "Western", i.e., capitalist, society.

To oppose the onslaught of "spiritual imperialism" on the issues of democracy, it is not enough to contrapose true facts to false realities to fabrications. The best way to expose ideological expansion is to launch an ideological counter-offensive against the "theories" of the apologists of capitalism. An example of such a counter-offensive is to be found in Lenin's book *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. Its arguments still afford a reliable methodological basis for a comparative, scientifically objective analysis of two types of democracy: bourgeois and socialist.

Is "Pure Democracy" Possible?

Among Kautsky's "discoveries" which have enlarged the arsenal of the enemies of socialism one must definitely list his thesis that a political regime characterised by universal equality before the law, absolute individual freedom, etc., in a word, "pure democracy", is possible under capitalism. With the democratic institutions primarily legal standards guaranteeing universal suffrage and legal opposition—the bourgeois state, Kautsky argued, ceases to be a weapon of "class egoism" of the bourgeoisie and becomes the advocate of the interests of the majority of the electorate. Consequently, the working class must not smash the old bourgeois state machine. In Kautsky's opinion, "socialism may be decreed" through democratic institutions in accordance with the simple rule, i.e., the minority—the exploiters—submit to the majority—the exploited.

This attitude is today maintained by Kautsky's spiritual heirs—the champions of “democratic socialism”, the Right-wing Social Democrats. After the Social Democrats have been in power in a number of West European countries for many years it has become clear that insofar as they are concerned “socialism” means merely limited reforms in the sphere of distribution, ones that do not essentially affect the capitalist mode of production. They see the main instrument for the realisation of these reforms in the bourgeois state which is capable of playing the role of “supra-class arbiter” concerned with the well-being of every citizen. They hold that for this it is only necessary constantly to improve the institutions of bourgeois democracy, to make them absolute, i.e., “pure”, like Kautsky wrote.

Proceeding from the Marxist theory of democracy and creatively developing and adapting it to the new epoch, the epoch of socialist revolutions and national liberation movements, the epoch of the transition from capitalism to communism, Lenin showed that the “pure democracy” concept was completely invalid theoretically. Kautsky justified the passivity of the Right-opportunist leaders of West European Social Democracy who in fact fettered the revolutionary initiative of the masses when a revolutionary situation arose not only in Russia, but in a number of other countries, and conditions had become ripe for the transition of power into the hands of the working class, into the workers' hands. Whitewashing the bourgeois state, Kautsky surrounded it with an aura of special legitimacy as one embodying abstract democratic ideals. It was not an academic dispute, but a polemic

between irreconcilable ideological-political views. Lenin, who was bearing the heavy burden as the leader of the young Soviet republic surrounded by enemies, thought of the destinies of the working people of other countries and of their deliverance from capitalist slavery, while Kautsky occupied himself with demobilising the masses, side-tracked their attention with phrases about pure democracy from the struggle against the exploiters, and glossed over the class nature of the bourgeois state.

In his polemic with Kautsky, Lenin turned to the works of Marx and Engels. He demonstrated his thorough knowledge of the Marxist theory and graphically depicted Kautsky's departure from Marxism whose orthodox champion he claimed to be. Lenin's main argument was a complex analysis of the problems of democracy in the course of which he creatively applied Marxism in solving the questions of correlation of forms and essence of the state, of the general and particular under democratic and other political regimes.

The “pure democracy” concept rests on the formal definition of democracy as a definite method of forming organs of power and procedure of adopting political decisions. Quoting Aristotle, its advocates to this day call democratic the state in which public affairs are settled as willed by the majority of the citizens (with the compulsory subordination of the minority to the majority). Moreover, the rulers are elected, the citizens are equal before the law and enjoy certain rights and freedoms, and the opposition can take any political action within the bounds of legality. Being captives of the liberal legal doctrines of the past, the latter-day followers

of Kautsky have no desire to take a look behind the legal facade of any form of government, to see how democratic institutions really operate in different socio-economic, cultural and historical conditions, political traditions and ideological climate.

Criticising the "pure democracy" concept, Lenin first proved invalid the formally legal approach to the definition of democracy. "Infatuated with the 'purity' of democracy," Lenin wrote ironically, "Kautsky *inadvertently* commits the same little error that all bourgeois democrats always commit, namely, he takes formal equality (which is nothing but a fraud and hypocrisy under capitalism) for actual equality."¹ This does not mean that the formally legal approach has no right to exist. In Lenin's works we meet with the definition of democracy from the legal angle too—for instance, as a state recognising the subordination of the minority to the majority. But the revelation of the legal aspects of democracy alone does not disclose its socio-class essence, the role it plays in the life of society.

Lenin reminded Kautsky that democracy was a form of state and the state was a machine for the suppression of one class by another. So long as society is divided into antagonistic classes there can be no talk of "pure democracy" or "absolute democracy" or "democracy in general", but only one of class democracy as an instrument of class domination. "If we argue in a Marxist way," Lenin wrote, "we must say: the exploiters inevitably transform the state (and we are speaking of democracy, i.e., one of the forms of the state) into an instrument of the rule

of their class, the exploiters, over the exploited. Hence, as long as there are exploiters who rule the majority, the exploited, the democratic state must inevitably be a democracy for the exploiters."² And Kautsky reasons like a liberal: instead of social relations between the exploiters and the exploited, he analyses juridical relations between the majority and the minority. Lenin said that democracy was always a relative thing in the conditions of class society and Kautsky sought to substantiate the possibility of absolute democracy in the conditions of capitalism.

Science ends where faith in the absolute begins. Kautsky's one-sided juridical formalism predetermined the pseudo-scientific nature of the "pure democracy" concept which is closely bound up with all manner of constitutional illusions disseminated by the apologists of bourgeois democracy. Consequently, its debunking by Lenin was of vast political, and not only theoretical, significance. Lenin's polemic with Kautsky over the nature of democracy contributed, thanks to his arguments, to the spiritual emancipation of the revolutionary masses, to their liberation from the fetters of bourgeois political mystification which rests on abstract conceptions of democracy and the state.

Asking in his analysis the question of "democracy for which class?", Lenin characterised it as a thing belonging exclusively to a class society. The peculiarities of democracy are determined by the socio-economic conditions on which one or another type of state depends. Ancient democracy could be developed as in

¹ *Ibid.*, 252.

² *Ibid.*, p. 250.

Athens in the days of Pericles or it could degrade as it did in Rome in the days of Augustus, but it was always a form of the slave-owners' political domination. In the Middle Ages democratic regimes existed in republican city-states, there were democratic institutions also in parliamentary monarchies, but with far more limited powers. Nevertheless, under all circumstances, democracy remained a class one and did not extend to the lower strata—the peasants and the city poor. Under capitalism, democracy, irrespective of the level of its development, functions in such a way that everywhere and always only the bourgeoisie can really enjoy its fruits.

Democracy as a form of state thus exists as long as there is a class society. The history of democracy, Lenin pointed out, offers many examples of the infinite number of its forms which inevitably changed in the course of millennia, starting with its embryo in antiquity, as one ruling class succeeded another. Each historical type of democracy was transient: gone never to return are the ancient and feudal democracies and the same fate awaits bourgeois democracy.

The Leninist thesis about the historically transient nature of bourgeois democracy appears to be especially topical today. Offering emergent Asian, African and Latin American countries prescriptions of development that suit the West, bourgeois propagandists often refer to the conception of American economist Milton Friedman who tightly binds the destinies of capitalism and democracy. The socialist society, he affirms, cannot be democratic, it cannot guarantee individual freedom. The latter is ensured only

by a type of organisation that directly secures economic freedom, i.e., by capitalism based on free competition.

As is known, liberal capitalism with its free competition has long passed away both in Western Europe and the United States, giving way to monopoly and state-monopoly capitalism. Modern capitalism is distinguished by the state's vigorous intervention in the economic sphere, and if Friedman followed the logic of his own arguments, he would have to drop from the "club of democracies" the capitalist countries which bourgeois science traditionally regards as models of democracy. But Friedman's conception serves to conceal and not establish the truth, science in it is subordinated to politics. It is no chance accident that it is willingly adopted as well-nigh official ideology by some dictatorial regimes in Latin America, for instance the Chilean junta which does not even think of restoring democracy in its country.

The political history of Western Europe and the United States, which the apologists of capitalism like to quote, reveals that democracy was by no means a "natural" political consequence of free competition. The modern bourgeois state became democratised long after capitalist relationships had taken root in the economy. Attempts to portray the bourgeoisie as a champion of democracy "for all" are beneath criticism. It was only after the masses had emerged on to the political scene and began to protest against socio-economic and political discrimination that the ruling class was compelled to agree to universal suffrage. The masses' accession to politics was by far not always peaceful: there

was no dearth of revolutionary actions in the 19th century and one of the main demands was for universal suffrage. The bourgeoisie never "presented" democratic rights to the masses, these rights were won in bitter political struggle.

The thesis about the "indissoluble link between capitalism and democracy" is also refuted by the fact that bourgeois democracy is not the only form of the political rule of the bourgeoisie. As any exploiter state of the past, the modern bourgeois state is capable of performing its functions in both democratic and anti-democratic forms, as well as in an intermediate form. The bourgeois attitude to democracy is instrumental: democracy is defended as long as its existence does not jeopardise the foundations of the capitalist mode of production. To preserve these foundations, the most reactionary part of the bourgeoisie agrees to the establishment of different anti-democratic regimes, all the way to fascist-type terrorist dictatorship.

The instrumental nature of the bourgeoisie's attitude to democracy is also testified to by the practical activities of the bourgeoisie in the countries held to be "classical examples" of democratism. The bourgeoisie reconciles itself completely to the violation of democratic freedoms in the countries whose ruling cliques have shown they are allies the West can depend on. Moreover, the support of odious dictatorial regimes goes hand in hand with hypocritical complaints that "there is no democracy" in the countries that have broken with capitalism.

And so bourgeois democracy is a class, relative, limited democracy today too. When we speak of democracy under capitalism we do not speak of

democracy in general, but of a historically transient type of democracy that will pass away together with capitalism.

The revolutionary-democratic force of Lenin's criticism of the "pure democracy" concept lies in the fact that it fully proves that the collapse of capitalism cannot be identified with the end of democracy. "History knows of bourgeois democracy which takes the place of feudalism, and of proletarian democracy which takes the place of bourgeois democracy," Lenin wrote.¹

Following the lead of reactionary bourgeois jurisprudence, Kautsky failed to see institutions of new socialist democracy—a democracy of the highest type—coming into existence in the flames of the Russian revolution. Only from the position of a revolutionary, from the position of a champion of the interests of the exploited majority, could one really scientifically analyse the worldwide and historic significance of the transition from democracy for the exploiters to democracy for the people. Regarding the actual participation of the masses in the administration of public affairs as one of the most important criteria of democratism, Lenin wrote: "Proletarian democracy, of which Soviet government is one of the forms, has brought a development and expansion of democracy unprecedented in the world, for the vast majority of the population, for the exploited and working people... The Soviet government is the first in the world (or strictly speaking, the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to enlist the people,

¹ Ibid., p. 242.

specifically the *exploited* people, in the work of administration."¹

The increasingly big role played by the masses in the work of administration is an objective requirement of socialist and communist construction. Democracy as a form of state under socialism constantly develops and improves. The democratism of the state of proletarian dictatorship grows into the democratism of the state of the entire people as all the classes and strata of socialist society achieve ideological and political unity.

But does that mean that socialism leads to the establishment of "pure, absolute" democracy? Lenin replied to this question in the negative. Indeed, under socialism democracy still remains a form of the state in which elements of coercion have to be preserved—for instance, against those who violate socialist legality. Under communism, however, the state and socialist democracy will be replaced by communist self-administration. Therefore, "pure democracy" is not only an unscientific term that reveals lack of understanding of both the struggle of the classes and the essence of the state, but is an empty phrase because in a communist society democracy will die away as it regenerates and turns into a habit, but will never become "pure democracy".

How "the Government of the Majority for the Majority" Turns into Its Opposite

Proceeding from the thesis about the class nature of democracy, Lenin thoroughly analysed

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

the mechanism of bourgeois democracy. He debunked the myths of bourgeois democracy Kautsky clung to. "Bourgeois democracy," he said, "although a great historical advance in comparison with medievalism, always remains, and under capitalism is bound to remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited, for the poor."² The time that has passed since these lines were written has merely enriched and increased the set of facts proving this thesis to be true.

Lenin convincingly disclosed the formal nature of many of the rights and freedoms proclaimed by bourgeois constitutions and creating the semblance of "equal opportunities" in the sphere of politics and state administration for the exploiters and the exploited, for the rich and the poor, for the elite and for the people. "Even in the most democratic bourgeois state," he wrote, "the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the 'democracy' of the capitalists and the thousands of *real* limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into *wage-slaves*."³ The possibility of really taking part in the administration of state affairs is separated from the working masses by thousands of economic, social and political barriers.

How effective these barriers are is evidenced by the social composition of the representative bodies and the state machine in the leading "Western democracies". In the Federal Republic

² *Ibid.*, p. 243.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

of Germany, for instance, workers make up only 7 per cent of the Bundestag deputies, and that in a country where the working class accounts for more than half the population! Nor does the social composition of the U.S. Congress testify to "equal political opportunities": of the 555 Congressmen, 140 are entrepreneurs and bankers, 243 are lawyers, 47 are publishers and journalists, and 25 are farmers.

No less elitist in character is the social composition of the upper echelons of state bureaucracy. Only 6 per cent of the high-ranking officials in France, a country of "classical" bourgeois bureaucracy, come from the people. In the specially important services, for instance, the departments subordinated to the Premier, their number declines to 2.25 per cent of the total.¹ Does this not testify to the correctness of Lenin's claim that the way to high posts in a bourgeois country is paved by the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education and of social connections?

Unable to hush up that the number of working people's representatives in the state administrative bodies is disproportionately small, the apologists of bourgeois democracy have adopted the theory of "elitist democracy" to depict this factual inequality in a light favourable for capitalism. Politics and state administration are a job for professionals, for the "elite"; they argue. Democracy does not mean that the people take a direct part in the administration of society, it means that they

can elect at their discretion the representatives of the elite who are capable of governing in the interest of the people.

This is yet another variety of the apologetics of bourgeois democracy based on the formal depiction of the elections as a means of the people's free expression of their will. Kautsky approached this question in the same way. Lenin's criticism of his "electoral illusions" is thus as topical as ever.

Lenin proceeds from the fact that "under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more 'pure' democracy is developed—drive the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc."² As a result, "universal suffrage sometimes produces petty-bourgeois, sometimes reactionary and counter-revolutionary parliaments ... the form of elections, the form of democracy, is one thing, and the class content of the given institution is another".²

Can elections under capitalism really become a means of expression of the people's will and thus lose their class meaning and stop helping to perpetuate the political rule of the bourgeoisie? Impartial data on the electoral systems in the "Western democratic countries" reveal that the ruling class there has a whole arsenal of means at its disposal to achieve the election results it needs.

In our day these means are highly sophisticated. As a result of the working people's struggle the ruling class has been forced to

¹ *Le Monde*, July 7, 1981, p. 4.

² *Ibid.*, p. 247.

² *Ibid.*, p. 269.

eliminate a whole number of patently political and legal procedure that formally restricted the working people's participation in the elections. Monopoly bourgeoisie has been compelled to reconcile itself also with the partial loss of ideological monopoly. The development of the mass democratic press has undoubtedly lessened the possibilities of the ruling topcrust to manipulate with the electorate's sentiment. Lastly, the ruling class has been made to allow the existence of the working people's political parties and mass organisations that are capable of offering a real alternative to bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties in the elections.

In these conditions the party system is the main means of adapting universal suffrage to the requirements of the ruling class. This system enables the bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties to make use of the vast advantages of which even the biggest political parties upholding the interests of the working people are deprived.

This is especially obvious under the two-party system—it is not fortuitous that the tendency towards it is now discerned in all the "Western democratic countries", while in the United States it has prevailed for more than 100 years. The multi-party system, which formerly fully suited the ruling class when the bourgeois parties held undivided sway on the political scene and, all the more so, when it concealed the true class nature of power behind a signboard of political pluralism, became an insufficiently reliable prop of the existing system when the anti-monopoly opposition had gained in strength. The fractionalisation of the vote among different parties may

in an election bring to the fore the "undesirable" political forces capable of using the rule of the majority to the detriment of the interests of the dominant class. It is to avoid this that the transition to the two-party system is being brought about, and the leading bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties, using the deliberately cultivated "imperfections" of the electoral systems, keep "outsiders" from the helm.

Such a practice manifests itself most openly in the relative-majority electoral system, when the votes given to candidates defeated in their constituencies are not taken into account during the distribution of seats in parliament. There have been instances in the history of British elections when the victorious party polled fewer votes nationwide than the defeated party. If one of the "poles" of the two-party system can suffer from the obvious partiality of the electoral mechanism, what can one say of the small parties whose votes are invariably "lost"?

More popular is the proportional system of voting, but it also is subjected to modifications in order to accommodate the interests of the leading bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties. In West Germany, for instance, there exists the celebrated 5 per cent barrier—the party obtaining a smaller percentage of the vote is debarred from the Bundestag. The "price" of these per cent constantly grows: by the beginning of the 1980s it reached two million votes. A political system can hardly be called "representative" if it can deprive such a large number of people of the right to have their representatives in parliament. But this obvious violation of formal democratism especially accords with

the interests of the ruling class which feels safer when there are no Communists in parliament, no representatives of other progressive parties which may jeopardise its privileges.

Elections in the "Western democratic countries" are so arranged that they not only ignore, but completely distort the electorate's will. This is done by numerous manipulations in registering voters, nominating candidates, and establishing constituencies. The ruling elite seeks to predetermine the outcome long before the actual election, to turn this only possibility for the majority of the citizens to influence state affairs into a mere formality. No small part here is also played by the manner in which election campaigns are conducted.

Modern mass election campaigns are highly expensive things in which, as in any other "business", one can invest in the hope of receiving dividends. Big Business willingly participates in financing election campaigns of big bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties, expecting not without grounds that "political capital" will bring its representatives influence in parliament and other government bodies. But to get the possibility to "please" the electorate, a political party must win the favour of the country's true masters who will pay for the expensive election campaign. No one in the business community will of course finance any party that challenges the capitalist system.

It would be simplifying things to say that the probability of success in the elections is directly proportional to the sum of the "political capital investment". But without the minimum expenditure, which grows from year to year, a party simply cannot electioneer on a nationwide

scale, its voice will not be heard by the voters. In the past few years the cost of such a campaign in the United States, for instance, has increased two to three times over. The same thing may be observed in West European countries, where even mass parties with big receipts from membership fees are compelled more and more to depend on donations.

In recent years bourgeois lawyers have put no little effort into devising a mechanism of financing election campaigns that would rule out—if only formally—the possibility of the "purchase" of candidates and parties by Big Business and make less obvious the advantages the parties get for upholding the interests of the ruling class. Laws on the state financing of elections have been promulgated to this end in a number of countries. On the face of it they may seem just and impartial, for the amount of state subsidies depends on the number of votes polled and not on the "colour" of the party programme.

Actually, however, the new laws serve to strengthen the bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties' monopoly positions in political life, to preserve the electorate backing them. For only the big parties long polling large numbers of votes are given the possibility of covering the outlays on election campaigns out of the state budget, i.e., out of the pockets of taxpayers, by far not everyone of whom agrees with their political platform. Besides the financial pressure brought to bear upon politicians by different factions of the monopoly bourgeoisie there is now a system of organised state-monopoly financing of the political structures which accord with the class interests of the

monopoly bourgeoisie in general. This confirms once again Lenin's conclusion that there can be no equality between the exploiter and the exploited in the political sphere.

As numerous surveys of the electorate's conduct at the polls show, the Western voter feels he is becoming increasingly alienated from the political system in which he is assigned the rôle of supernumerary. He is also made to feel that by the special style of electoral rhetoric with its exalted mutual attacks by the candidates of the rivaling parties, advancement of programmes and promises that are known to be unfeasible, and massive pressure brought to bear upon the emotions and not the intellect of people who are forced to put up not with serious clashes between political platforms but with boring competition in eloquence and the personal charm of the leaders of the major bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties.

This results in the voter beginning to avoid the elections, which is the most characteristic sign of political apathy. Only 52.5 per cent of the electorate voted in the U.S. Presidential election in 1980—in other words, 76 million American citizens decided that their participation in the election would not substantially affect the administration of state affairs. If this is not evidence of the people's profound disappointment in bourgeois democracy!

Some bourgeois authors see nothing abnormal in the fact that a considerable number of citizens stay away from politics. But many bourgeois ideologists regard people's heightened political activity as a must for the survival of "Western democracy" and the enhancement of the rôle played by representative institutions in the

political system. They forget, however, that the institutions designed to revive the voters' activity have long ceased to play the part assigned them in the bourgeois constitutions. This being the case, Lenin's criticism of the restricted and conventional nature of bourgeois parliamentarism is as topical as ever.

Parliaments are influenced most by the democratic forces in the conditions of universal suffrage. At the same time, because of the notorious division of powers, they play the least rôle in the actual administration of the state which is done by executive bodies controlling a gigantic bureaucratic apparatus. This being the case, the parliaments, to quote Lenin, "*never decide important questions under bourgeois democracy*".¹ Now decisions are taken by the executive bodies of the bourgeois state and the bureaucratic apparatus. Even the results of voting in parliament are predetermined both in the head quarters of the leading political parties and behind the parliamentary scenes. The irrelevance of parliamentary illusions, which Lenin noted in his day, has thus become still more obvious in our day.

The bourgeois parliaments are losing their authority. Even in France, a country with old parliamentary traditions, actually 30 per cent of the voters stay away from the elections to the National Assembly. This is a direct consequence, firstly, of parliament's lack of power to decide many important issues and, secondly, of the isolation of the deputies of the ruling bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties from the

¹ Ibid., p. 247.

masses. Criticising the apologists of bourgeois parliamentarism like Kautsky, Lenin wrote: "The working people are *barred* from participation in bourgeois parliaments ... by thousands of obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions *alien* to them, instruments for the *oppression* of the workers by the bourgeoisie, institutions of a hostile class, of the exploiting minority."¹

Faced with the obvious erosion of one of the most important constitutional institutions of bourgeois democracy—parliament—many liberal theoreticians advocate a "return to the original principles of the constitution". Stricter observance of the democratic principles of bourgeois constitutions is naturally of progressive significance, but it should not be forgotten that there are quite a few reactionary provisions in those same constitutions. Therefore, the slogan that the constitution should be strictly observed remains, as in the days of Lenin's polemic with Kautsky, an apologetic slogan that ignores the anti-democratic moments of the basic laws of the "Western democracies".

Lenin proceeded from the facts of the political life of his day when he said that Kautsky's juristic constitutionalism "shamelessly embellishes" bourgeois democracy. "There is not a single state, however democratic, which has no loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in

case of a 'violation of public order', and actually in case the exploited class 'violates' its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner,"² Lenin wrote. He denounced with murderous irony Kautsky's claim that under capitalism democracy means "protecting the minority" and went on to say: "The learned Mr. Kautsky has 'forgotten'—accidentally forgotten, probably—a 'trifle', namely, that the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy extends the protection of the minority only to another bourgeois party, while the proletariat, on all serious, profound and fundamental issues, gets martial law or pogroms, instead of the 'protection of the minority'. *The more highly developed a democracy is, the more imminent are pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous to the bourgeoisie.*"²

To bolster these conclusions, Lenin recalled the repression to which striking workers were subjected in the United States and Switzerland, the suppression of the internationalist minorities in all the "democracies" of the world, and the baiting of the Bolsheviks in the "democratic republic of Russia" in April 1917. Seemingly foreseeing "wartime restrictions" referred to by the apologists of bourgeois democracy, Lenin cited examples also from capitalism's development on peacetime.

Has there been any change in this sense in the nature of bourgeois legislation and the basic laws of bourgeois democracies in the past decades? The answer to this question will be

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 247

² *Ibid.*, p. 244

² *Ibid.*, p. 245

negative even if one simply compares the facts cited by Lenin and the political events of our day. Lenin wrote about the reprisals against striking workers and in 1981, infuriated by the perseverance of American air controllers, the Reagan Administration resorted to a mass lock-out. Lenin wrote of the lynching of Black Americans and today civil rights fighters in the United States are tried or killed by hired assassins, as was the case with Martin Luther King in 1967. Lenin wrote of repression in Northern Ireland and the occupation regime there today rests on brute force too.

Political repression, i.e., persecution of people or organisations striving for a change of the existing system because of their convictions, has become a common occurrence in the political life of the countries alleged to be models of democracy. Reprisals may now become more intensive and now less so, this depending on the political situation, but they never disappear from the domestic political scene, and precisely because of the "loopholes and reservations" provided for by the bourgeois constitutions of which Lenin wrote. Thus, according to American lawyer Robert Goldstein, there has not been a single period in the United States this century without there being one or another law restricting the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens with Left convictions. Back in the years of the First World War the U.S. Congress passed laws on espionage and anti-government propaganda, whose application represented a combination of downright terror and systematic persecution of dissenters—working-class militants, Communists, civil rights fighters and pacifists. The immigration laws of 1917,

1918, 1920, 1950 and 1952 paved the way for the authorities to act arbitrarily in issuing visas for entry into the United States. It was on the grounds of these laws that people suspected of ties with "world communism" were debarré or deported from the United States. In the era of McCarthyism tens of thousands of people were subjected by the notorious Un-American Activities Committee to humiliating loyalty check-ups and defamed, doing all this on the pretext of "defending democracy". It was then, too, that the American ruling element began to make wide use of different methods of unofficially persecuting progressive politicians and organisations. Spying, bugging telephone conversations, baiting with the help of mass media—these methods and murder by hired killers became part of the arsenal of secret political reprisals.

Political persecution in the United States was largely responsible for the fact that progressive mass organisations could not become sufficiently influential there. It turned, moreover, into a means of intimidation of politically active people and gave rise to the Americans' so-called "self-restriction" in rights and freedoms.

Bourgeois politologists, compelled to admit crying violations of a number of "principles of liberalism" in the United States, sometimes allege that in this respect the "American model" is an "exception to the rule". Robert Dahl, for instance, is convinced that the legal and social measures against dissenters in West European countries are "less tough" than in the United States. Well, one can agree with that to some extent—the powerful democratic movement in the West European countries does not allow

the ruling circles to "catch up" with the ruling circles in the United States, where there is no strong democratic opposition. But one can clearly discern in Western Europe too the tendency to legalise various restrictions of people's political rights and freedoms on the pretext of "defending democracy".

One of the most vivid examples is the Federal Republic of Germany, whose ruling circles have adopted the conception of "efficient democracy". Officially, its essence is formulated in the following substantiated and attractive slogan: "No freedom to enemies of freedom." Indeed, such a slogan cannot but sound topical in a country where the most anti-democratic, reactionary forces legally came to power 50 years ago. The question is who is really persecuted in the F.R.G. as "enemies of freedom"?

Practice shows that listed among the "enemies of freedom", enemies of the constitution are not only and not so much followers of nazism as people and organisations of Left orientation—Communists, Left Social Democrats, peace champions, etc. As West German lawyer Ernst Dunninger has pointed out, restriction of their rights and freedoms on the pretext of defending the principles of the democratic system does not at all mean that these people and organisations engage in subversion. Their views simply do not conform to the ideology of the ruling political parties.

Although there is no danger of a coup d'état being staged by the so-called "radical elements" in the F.R.G., as former Federal Prosecutor Max Gude has admitted it, the country's authorities encourage giving wider "discretionary" powers to the police and the departments safe-

guarding the constitution which spy on politically active people, bug their telephones and keep dossiers on them. According to Dunninger, this tendency has reached its climax in the sphere of criminal law since the adoption of legislation against terrorism and in connection with *Berufsverbot*, i.e., ban on professional employment.

In our day, too, behind the facade of bourgeois democracy, the reactionary forces are accumulating "legal potential" which may, in the event of a crisis, be used to deprive the working people of their democratic gains. As Lenin showed, such accumulation was made possible by the class narrow-mindedness of bourgeois democracy and its adaptability to the defence of the interests of the ruling topcrust who feel all the more confident having anti-democratic methods of administration "in reserve". For the ruling class democracy is not an aim in itself, it is only a means of securing its dominant position.

In the conditions of capitalism democracy always and above all remains a democracy for the rich. But does that mean that revolutionaries striving for the socialist reorganisation of society must take a nihilistic view of the possibility of democratising the existing political institutions? Conscientious study of Lenin's *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* and many other classical works of Marxism-Leninism shows that this teaching has nothing in common with such an "ultra-revolutionary" disregard for the problems arising in the struggle for democracy in capitalist conditions.

Lenin wrote that bourgeois democracy was more

progressive than the other forms of capitalist state. Democracy creates the best conditions for the material and spiritual progress of society and individuals, and exerts a salutary influence on all aspects of life. Lenin saw in democratic values not only a class content, but a content affecting all mankind.

Lenin substantiated the need to strive for the expansion of democracy under capitalism from the positions of the oppressed classes which could be fully delivered from exploitation only by a socialist revolution.

A constructive, genuinely revolutionary attitude towards the achievements of bourgeois democracy has nothing in common with the reformist idea of improving and renovating its institutions as the sole objective of the "socialist movement". The reformists' practical deeds have shown that they pass off "minor repairs" of the facade of the bourgeois state for socialist reforms. The struggle for socialism cannot be limited to political reforms, it is profoundly social inasmuch as its goal is radical reorganisation of social relations. It is through this reorganisation that there emerges a democracy of a new, higher type, a socialist democracy which combines the principles of political freedom with the ideals of social justice.

Vast masses of the working people are today coming to realise that democracy cannot be achieved without the promotion of just social relationships. In the industrial capitalist countries the thesis concerning the need to overcome the formal character of bourgeois democracy, formerly upheld only by the Communists and the most class-conscious workers, is meeting with support among wide sections of the

population that are a mighty reserve in the anti-monopoly struggle. Nor does bourgeois democracy suit the nations that have recently freed themselves from colonial dependence and that are tackling the highly complex tasks of eliminating inequality, poverty and the survivals of the colonial past. It is no chance accident, therefore, that the working people the world over are interested in the experience of socialist democracy, in the political system which exists in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and which has been chosen by the nations laying the foundation of socialism.

Social development thus confirms in practice Lenin's just criticism of bourgeois democracy which has already disappeared from the historical scene in many countries and given way to socialist democracy.

Genuine Democracy and Freedom

In this section we shall deal with the questions of socialist democracy which Lenin raised on account of Kautsky's attacks on the political system of the young Soviet republic.

When Kautsky accused the Bolsheviks of destroying democracy, it was hardly likely that he thought that 60 years later his arguments would be repeated by the present-day Sovietologists in their attacks on the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. of 1977. British politologists Thomas Rigby and Archibald Brown thus allege that the Soviets are a poor form of state organisation and that they are incapable of really taking part in the adoption of decisions on state administration because they consist of people

engaged in production who "do not know" how to run a state. This argument was used by the ideologists of the counter-revolution in Russia and also by Kautsky when he declared that the Soviets, which he nevertheless recognised as an "all-embracing", "combat organisation of the proletariat", must not turn into state organisations, into organs of state power.

Lenin regarded the existence of conditions for the working people's direct participation in the administration of state affairs as the basic criterion of democracy. He demanded from the very first days of Soviet power "an immediate break with the prejudiced view that only the rich, or officials chosen from rich families, are capable of administering the state, of performing the ordinary, everyday work of administration. We demand that *training* in the work of state administration be conducted by class-conscious workers and soldiers and that this training be begun at once, i.e., that a *beginning* be made at once in training all the working people, all the poor, for this work."¹

Demanding genuine, direct democracy, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party took into account the profoundly democratic nature of the socialist revolution and the actual laws governing the building of socialism and communism. The proletarian revolution is a higher form of democracy than the bourgeois one, a "referendum of action"—direct political action by the masses that play the role of passive contemplators of the political game in the period of the "peaceful" development of capitalism. The socialist revolution

alone draws all the working people and the exploited, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the population, and not just separate sections or classes, into conscious history-building. And they are being drawn not for a certain period, for several months or years, but for the entire period of socialist and communist construction. By virtue of its nature and unlike the bourgeois revolution, the socialist revolution does not lead to the subsequent removal of the masses from direct participation in politics. This happens because the socialist revolution does not end but only begins with the assumption of power, which is followed by a period of capitalist society's radical transformation into a socialist one. Each stage of socialist and communist construction stimulates the creative and political activities of the masses, and this leads to the constant expansion and perfection of socialist democracy.

The social nature of socialist property predetermines the social nature of state administration under socialism. Those who produce the material and spiritual values must take an active part in the adoption of decisions on all aspects of social life. This makes state administration all the more efficient, for it allows to take maximum account of the vast diversity of interests of the different categories of the population. Consequently, the policy pursued immediately after the establishment of Soviet power to enlist the participation of the working people in the administration of public affairs was not a demagogic "concession to the people", but stemmed from the objective requirements of the development of socialist statehood. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 113.

follows the same policy at the present stage, the stage of mature socialism. For the Party, socialist democracy means participation of the ever-increasing masses in the administration of the country and public affairs. The entire political system of Soviet society and the constantly growing initiative of the working people serve the cause of communist construction. The development of such democracy is an objective requirement, a prerequisite for the development and consolidation of socialist social relationships.

Is there in Soviet society a mechanism capable of promoting democracy and making it a pivot of political life and state administration? Kautsky and his present-day followers, captives of bourgeois-democratic prejudices, deny it. As far as they are concerned, democracy is inconceivable without the traditional institutions and, above all, without a bourgeois-type parliament.

And yet revolutionary developments in the U.S.S.R. not only created but thoroughly tested the kind of state structure that is really able to ensure greater democracy than the traditional bourgeois parliament. The reference is to the Soviets which, having come into existence in the battles of the 1905 revolution, became a basic constitutional element of the political system of the U.S.S.R. Despite assertions by Kautsky and present-day Sovietologists to the contrary, the Soviets were not forced upon the people by the Communists. They were and are the creation of the masses, a product of the proletariat's revolutionary creativity in Russia. As Lenin pointed out, "it was the great creative spirit of the people, which had passed through the

bitter experience of 1905 and had been made wise by it, that gave rise to this form of proletarian power."¹ During the February 1917 revolution, Lenin wrote, "guided by their class instinct, the workers have realised that in revolutionary times they need *not only* ordinary, but an entirely different organisation. They have rightly taken the path indicated by the experience of our 1905 Revolution and of the 1871 Paris Commune; they have set up a *Soviet of Workers' Deputies*; they have begun to develop, expand and strengthen it by drawing in *soldiers' deputies*, and, undoubtedly, deputies from rural *wage workers*, and then (in one form or another) from the entire peasant poor."²

It was, of course, not to Kautsky's benefit to recognise the genuinely popular nature of the Soviets. Resorting to down-right falsification of historical facts, he tried to prove that Lenin spoke out for a republic of Soviets only when the Bolsheviks had found themselves in the minority in the Constituent Assembly. The main target of Kautsky's attack on Leninism was the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly decreed by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on January 19, 1918, which Kautsky claimed was tantamount to "destruction of democracy".

Exposing the nature of Kautsky's attacks, dishonest from the scientific point of view and counter-revolutionary from the political angle, Lenin cited historical facts showing that the Bolsheviks had made a choice in favour of the Soviets long before the election to the Consti-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, Moscow, 1977, p. 90.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, Moscow, 1981, p. 324.

tuent Assembly in November 1917. He theoretically proved that such a choice was natural and necessary from the viewpoint of the interests of the revolution and accorded with the interests of socialist and communist construction.

The facts reveal that in this choice there was not a grain of "party egoism" of which Kautsky shouted. Back in March 1917, when representatives of the "moderate socialist" trends hostile to the revolution—the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries—took advantage of the political inexperience of the proletariat and seized the leadership of the Soviets, the Bolshevik Party directed all the efforts in its work among the workers, soldiers and peasants towards making the Soviets more efficient and authoritative. There were no champions of the "All power to the Soviets" slogan more ardent and consistent than the Bolsheviks.

This slogan was not a tactical "slogan of the moment", it had a deep theoretical foundation. Marx and Engels had in their time spoken of the superiority of a "state of Commune type" over the ordinary parliamentary republic. In *The Civil War in France* Marx wrote: "The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time.... Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business."¹ Proceeding

from the theses laid down by Marx and Engels, Lenin stressed time and again in his works that the Soviet form of statehood was superior to traditional parliamentarism. Re-establishing the historical truth in reply to Kautsky's calumny, he wrote that "everyone knows that on the very day of my arrival in Russia on April 4, 1917, I publicly read my theses in which I proclaimed the superiority of the Paris Commune type of state over the bourgeois parliamentary republic. Afterwards I repeatedly stated this in print, as, for instance, in a pamphlet on political parties, which was translated into English and was published in January 1918.. More than that, the Conference of the Bolshevik Party held at the end of April 1917 adopted a resolution to the effect that a proletarian and peasant republic was superior to a bourgeois parliamentary republic, that our Party would not be satisfied with the latter, and the Party Programme should be modified accordingly."²

What grounds had Lenin and the Bolsheviks to see the prototype of a "Paris Commune type of state" in the Soviets even before the October Revolution? First of all, the Soviets made it possible, without negating the principle of representation but, on the contrary, carrying it out most consistently, to do away with the negative aspects of parliamentarism: separation of legislative activity from executive and parliament's isolation from the masses, i.e., transformation of the "people's" (formally) representative body into a club for the political elite. The Soviets of the revolutionary epoch already represented a well-organised system of

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1976, pp. 220 and 221.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 265-266.

local organs of power and of congresses of Soviets of all levels. The executive committees elected by the Soviets—from local executive committees to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee—allowed simultaneously to exercise the functions of both legislative and executive power. The way of electing and recalling deputies was both democratic and effective. "Indirect elections to non-local Soviets," Lenin wrote, "make it easier to hold congresses of Soviets, they make the *entire* apparatus less costly, more flexible, more accessible to the workers and peasants at a time when life is seething and it is necessary to be able very quickly to recall one's local deputy or to delegate him to a general congress of Soviets."¹

As a result of its historical superiority over the traditional parliamentary forms, the Soviet type of organisation has made it possible to put an end to the "eternal barrier" preventing the people from really taking part in state administration. "The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which *helps* them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way," Lenin wrote, "And in this it is the vanguard of the working and exploited people, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage of being best united by the large enterprises; it is easier for it than for all others to elect and exercise control over those elected. The Soviet form of organisation automatically *helps* to unite all the working and exploited people around their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureaucracy, the privileges of

wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc.(these real privileges are the more varied the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet form of organisation."¹ That the Soviets were able to become real bodies of democratic rule is testified to by the following fact: only in the first ten years after the October Revolution 19 million people were elected delegates to the congresses of Soviets, deputies, and members of the executive committees of the Soviets of the Russian Federation. This shows how practicable was the right proclaimed by the revolution for the masses to take part in political life, the right to deal with all questions of state administration. The working people in the capitalist countries have not been able to gain such a right in the centuries of existence of such traditional institutions of bourgeois democracy as universal suffrage, parliament, etc.

The Soviets—representative bodies of a new, higher type—have become the pivot of the political system of the world's first socialist state. It was the Soviets that adopted the most important political decisions, it is they that controlled and directed the activities of all the other sections of the state machine. "In Russia," Lenin wrote, "the bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed—and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants, *their* Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets have been put in control of the bureaucrats and *their*

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

Soviets have been authorised to elect the judges. This fact alone is enough for all the oppressed classes to recognise that Soviet power, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.¹

But Kautsky did not want to notice either this or any other facts testifying to the highest-level democratism of the Soviets. He preferred to grieve that the elections to them were not general, for the first Soviet Constitution of 1918 restricted the franchise of the exploiters, i.e., people living by exploiting hired labour. Kautsky alleged this was a general law of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the main point at which, in his opinion, the form of the proletariat's political rule "broke" with democracy.

"In speaking about the franchise, Kautsky betrayed himself as an opponent of the Bolsheviks, who does not care a brass farthing for theory," Lenin wrote.² He further noted that "the question of restricting the franchise is a nationally specific and not a general question of the dictatorship. One must approach the question of restricting the franchise by studying the *specific conditions* of the Russian revolution and the *specific path* of its development."³

Waging a struggle to establish Soviet power, the Communists in Russia—the Bolsheviks—by no means demanded that the bourgeoisie be disfranchised. This fact, reflected in the 1918

Constitution, was not a result of the Bolsheviks' "perfidy", but a reply measure the young Soviet republic was forced to take when an attempt was made to undermine it from within by counter-revolutionaries backed by the exploiter strata in city and countryside—from capitalists and bankers to petty businessmen and shopkeepers. "Of course, Kautsky the historian failed to notice this," Lenin wrote ironically. "He failed to understand that even when the Mensheviks (who compromised with the bourgeoisie) still ruled the Soviets, the bourgeoisie cut themselves off from the Soviets of their own accord, boycotted them, put themselves up in opposition to them and intrigued against them.... The fury of the bourgeoisie against this independent and omnipotent (because it was all-embracing) organisation of the oppressed, the fight, the unscrupulous, self-seeking and sordid fight, the bourgeoisie waged against the Soviets; and, lastly, the overt participation of the bourgeoisie (from the Constitutional-Democrats to the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, from Milyukov to Kerensky) in the Kornilov mutiny—all this paved the way for the formal exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the Soviets."⁴

After the October Revolution, during the bitter struggle for the survival of the revolution, "formal exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the Soviets" became a vital necessity. While Kautsky affirmed that the exploiters, finding themselves in the minority, "would more readily become reconciled to their fate," the Russian capitalists and landowners by no means intended to play the role of "legal opposition". Calling

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

² *Ibid.*, p. 255.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 272-73.

the British, French, American, German and Japanese interventionists to their aid, they unleashed a civil war. They thus outlawed themselves, becoming not only counter-revolutionaries, but betrayers of national interests.

Did the restriction of the bourgeoisie' franchise lead, as Kautsky affirmed, to large masses of the population being deprived of political rights? Lenin proved this claim to be totally invalid and called it the "counter-revolutionary whining" of a bourgeois. Like the proletariat and the city poor, the overwhelming majority of the peasants, who did not employ hired labour, were not deprived of the franchise. The exploiter elements whom Soviet power was compelled to disfranchise did not exceed 2 per cent of the population. And 98 per cent of the citizens, i.e., the vast majority of the country's population, acquired for the first time a real right to elect and to be elected, access to state administration. And not only access. The organisation of the work of the Soviets, the electoral system and the recall of deputies, and their accountability to the voters—all this, as Lenin showed, was subordinated to the main task, that of securing genuine democracy.

The subsequent constitutional development of the Soviet Union confirmed Lenin's qualification of the restriction of franchise as a temporary, emergency measure. Important steps further to democratise the Soviet system of representation were made when conditions for the exploitation of man by man in the U.S.S.R. were eliminated. The restrictions of franchise affecting the former exploiters were lifted when the Soviet Constitution of 1936 came into force. From then on the Soviets were elected on the basis of

universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

The 1936 Constitution also introduced other important changes into the organisation of the Soviets' activities that had passed the test of time. The reference is above all to the substitution of the "pyramid" of the congresses of Soviets by a system of Supreme and local Soviets elected directly by the population.

Kautsky's spiritual heirs interpret this change as a "departure" from Lenin's behests about the Soviets. Having seized upon the Trotskyite thesis about the "Thermidorian degeneration" of Soviet power, they keep saying literally the following: Yes, in Lenin's day, the Soviets were the personification of democracy, but the parliamentary form of government with its characteristic division of powers was restored in 1936: the Soviets, remaining solely as a formal tribute to the revolutionary past, have lost their representative nature and prestige and turned into "gala assemblies" of bureaucrats.

Facts show that the hypocritical champions of the "purity" of the original idea of Soviets have no more proofs than its vehement opponent Kautsky. Like the latter, they do not see and do not want to see the political realities.

At present the Soviet State has its legislative bodies, executive and administrative organs, and an independent judicial system. The Soviet State does not deny the need of functional division of the administration of society by the state and the usefulness of the division of labour in state administration.

But such a division has nothing in common with the theory of dividing powers. Soviet power is the power of the urban and rural working people.

In this sense it is indivisible. Today, as in the early years after the October Revolution, the Soviet form of democracy is not confined to the expression of the people's will. The most important function of the Soviets has been preserved: they still do the will of millions of people.

Fulfilling this task, the Soviets act, firstly, as a single system of organs of state power, beginning with the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet and ending with settlement and village Soviets, and, secondly, as a permanent and only basis of the entire state machine, local and central, from bottom to top. They set up executive and administrative bodies, people's control bodies and other bodies accountable to them. The Soviets establish the courts of medium and higher instances. The U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet forms the government of the Soviet Union and appoints the Procurator-General of the U.S.S.R. who exercises supervisory powers over the entire procuratorial system.

The basic principles of the Soviets' activities have thus remained unchanged. The innovations mentioned and maligned by some critics of existing socialism marked a new, higher level of Soviet democracy. Indeed, did not the system of directly electing Soviets of all levels introduced in 1936 make the higher representative bodies closer to the people and more accessible to their direct influence? Did not the establishment of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet consisting of two chambers, the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, help secure fuller representation of interests of all groups of the Soviet people, of interests not only of social, but national groups as well?

There are quite a few arguments in favour of a positive answer to these questions. Here are just a few. One of the most important signs of really democratic elections—this major institution of the democratic political system—is their results, as reflected in the representative bodies. There were 2,286,000 people's deputies elected to the Supreme Soviets and 51,000 local Soviets in 1981, and workers accounted for 43.3 per cent, collective farmers for 25 per cent, and office employees and people of other professions for 31.7 per cent. They represent more than 100 nations and nationalities. Nearly half the deputies are women and every third deputy is below 30 years of age. We thus have before us a sort of social portrait of Soviet society, a reflection of its class structure and multinational character, a striking illustration of the genuine democratism of the Soviet system of representation.

A major indicator of the prestige of the representative bodies, a prestige resting on their democratism, efficiency, concern for the voters' needs and competence, is the degree of the Soviet citizens' activity during the elections. The overwhelming majority of the voters consciously and voluntarily take part in the elections to the Soviets. In 1937, for instance, 96.8 per cent of the electorate took part and beginning with 1950 their number has invariably topped 99.9 per cent.

Consequently, the peoples of the U.S.S.R. have genuinely democratic bodies in the form of Soviets. The system of Soviets, resting on the principles of democratic centralism and socialist federalism, is the backbone of the mechanism of the state of the entire people in which all the

other bodies are, under the Constitution, controlled by and accountable to the Soviets. The citizens' participation in the activities of the Soviets not only reflects their democratism but, moreover, guarantees efficient work by the representative bodies. Socialist democracy essentially means enlisting ever wider masses of working people for active administration of public affairs. It is this Leninist principle of socialist democracy that the Soviets implement first.

The present-day ideological struggle around the question of democracy causes one to recall yet another point of Lenin's polemic with Kautsky. The latter, to quote Lenin, told the German workers "with profound moral indignation" that on June 14, 1918, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee resolved to expel the representatives of the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Party and the Mensheviks from the Soviets. The Bolsheviks, he alleged, thus "removed" their rivals in "socialist" parties from the political scene and achieved dictatorship for their party which, in Kautsky's view, was "an intolerable departure from pure democracy".

Kautsky is echoed by the present-day enemies of existing socialism who distort the history of the emergence of the one-party system in the Soviet Union. They affirm that the Communists stand in principle for a one-party system and, therefore, the Left parties supporting the Communists in the anti-monopoly struggle are digging their own graves. Such insinuations usually gain ground whenever the Left forces unite to rebuff reaction. The object is clear. Their authors are out to sow distrust in the

Communists among the working people who are members of Socialist, Social Democratic and other parties. What were the historical conditions that led to the establishment of a one-party system in the Soviet Union? It first should be noted that in none of their works did Marx, Engels and Lenin affirm that socialism ruled out a multiparty system. The programme documents adopted by the Bolshevik Party at the time of the revolution also did not call for the establishment of a one-party system. On the contrary, as Lenin pointed out, the Bolsheviks' slogan urged agreement with petty-bourgeois parties, and the Bolshevik Party set out to realise this slogan on the very first day of the revolution.

The All-Russia Central Executive Committee elected by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets in November 1917 was a multiparty one. Its members were 62 Bolsheviks, 29 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, six Internationalist Mensheviks, three Ukrainian Socialists, and one Maximalist Socialist-Revolutionary. The Bolsheviks secured an overwhelming majority and acquired the indisputable right to form a one-party government. Nevertheless, they offered the second biggest group of delegates, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, to take part in the new government. Nor was the path to constructive participation in the work of the Soviet bodies barred to representatives of other petty-bourgeois parties, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries included.

At the same time, proceeding from the interests of the majority of the working and exploited masses that followed the Bolsheviks, Lenin clearly formulated the terms for the parties'

co-operation in the Soviets and the Soviet Government. "We stand firmly by the principle of Soviet power, i.e., the power of the majority obtained at the last Congress of Soviets," he pointed out. "We agreed, and still agree, to share power with the minority in the Soviets, provided that the minority loyally and honestly undertake to submit to the majority and carry out the programme, approved by the whole Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets for gradual, but firm and undeviating steps towards socialism."¹

The Menshevik and Right Socialist-Revolutionary parties immediately turned down Lenin's proposal of honest and faithful co-operation. Their leaders not only joined in an unprecedented campaign of slander against Soviet power, but embarked on the path of complicity in counter-revolution and intervention, and found themselves in the company of the organisers of armed actions against Soviet power. Moreover, in 1918-21 they co-operated with rabid monarchists, commanders of the counter-revolutionary armed forces like Kornilov, Kolchak and Dutov, helped the German imperialists to plunder the Ukraine and the Baltic area, and fostered American interests in Murmansk and Archangel, British interests in Transcaucasia and Central Asia, French interests in the South of Russia, and Japanese interests in Siberia. And Kautsky took all these executioners of the Russian revolution under his wing and demanded that the Bolsheviks thus "legalise" the whole of the counter-revolution which had outlawed itself by

betraying the national interests! Commenting on the utter inconsistency of this demand, Lenin wrote: "Yes, that is really awful, an intolerable departure from pure democracy, according to the rules of which our revolutionary Judas Kautsky will make the revolution. We Russian Bolsheviks should first have guaranteed immunity to the Savinkovs and Co., to the Lieberdants, Potresovs (activists) and Co., then drawn up a criminal code proclaiming participation in the Czech counter-revolutionary war, or in the alliance with the German imperialists in the Ukraine or in Georgia against the workers of one's own country to be 'punishable offences', and only then, on the basis of this criminal code, would we be entitled, in accordance with the principles of 'pure democracy', to expel 'definite persons' from the Soviets. It goes without saying that the Czechs, who are subsidised by the British and French capitalists through the medium (or thanks to the agitation) of the Savinkovs, Potresovs and Lieberdants, and the Krasnovs who receive ammunition from the Germans through the medium of the Ukrainians and Tiflis Mensheviks, would have sat quietly waiting until we were ready with our proper criminal code, and, like the purest democrats they are, would have confined themselves to the role of an 'opposition'.²"

In the summer of 1918, a few days after the Central Executive Committee's decree on the expulsion of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks from the Soviets, the path of the counter-revolution was taken by the leaders of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who engi-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, Moscow, 1977, p. 308.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 277.

neered the provocative assassination of German Ambassador Mirbach and a mutiny in Moscow and later organised an attempt on Lenin's life. The Bolsheviks thus turned out to be the only party which remained faithful to the ideas of the revolution. The petty-bourgeois parties, which had lost their followers as a result of their counter-revolutionary, treacherous activities, and not because they were formally banned, completely disappeared from the political scene by the beginning of the 1920s.

Historical conditions in a number of European and Asian socialist countries have made possible the successful existence and operation of a multiparty system. It is based on the co-operation of various political parties and organisations that took shape either in the process of resistance to fascism or national liberation struggle which developed into socialist revolutions. The Communist parties' exceptional role in the organisation of these revolutions secured them the leading position in the multiparty systems.

Development along the path to socialism thus does not at all mean negation of the multiparty system, providing all the parties represent the working strata of the population that co-operate in building socialism under the guidance of the working class and its militant vanguard, the Communist Party. The building of socialism has shown in practice the groundlessness of the "fears" spread by Kautsky with a view to sowing distrust in Bolsheviks and their followers in the West European countries.

Speaking of the superiority of proletarian, socialist democracy over bourgeois democracy, Lenin also dwelt on the subject of people's

political freedoms in new social conditions. Repeating again and again the "Liberal gentlemen's heartfelt phrase about freedom in general", Kautsky hypocritically complained that the Bolsheviks had "deprived the people" of the freedom of speech, the right to criticise the authorities openly, publicly.

If we turn to the historical facts, we shall clearly see that in speaking of the "people" Kautsky meant the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois parties and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks who joined them on a counter-revolutionary platform, for it was their "freedom" to slander Soviet power and agitate for its overthrow that was restricted by a Central Executive Committee decree in December 1917. But, being a true theoretician, Lenin this time too did not confine himself in this polemic merely to contraposing facts to fiction. He proved that the concept of freedom of the ideological leader of the Second International was theoretically invalid.

For a Marxist the concept of freedom has a profound social, class meaning. Freedom for whom and from what? This is how Marx, Engels and Lenin posed the question. And they replied: freedom for the working people, freedom from want and exploitation, freedom to work and create. Kautsky did not arrive at such an understanding of freedom: this "theoretician" stopped at the level of abstract slogans of the bourgeois revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries, demanding "freedom in general" and preserving the exploitation of man by man, a thing which deprived the working people—the vast majority of the population—of the possibility of enjoying the proclaimed freedoms.

Lenin was compelled to remind the "orthodox Marxist" Kautsky that in a society divided into exploiters and the exploited there can be no actual equality. Consequently, freedom remains freedom for the exploiting minority. The same is true of the concrete political freedoms—freedom of the press and freedom of assembly, about which Kautsky was especially concerned. "Freedom of the press ceases to be hypocrisy, because the printing-plants and stocks of paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie," Lenin wrote. "The same thing applies to the past buildings, the palaces, the mansions and manor-houses. Soviet power took thousands upon thousands of these best buildings from the exploiters at one stroke, and in this way made the right of assembly—without which democracy is a fraud—a million times more democratic for the people."¹

Soviet power thus not only proclaimed the freedom of the press and assembly, but created firm guarantees to enable millions of working people to enjoy this freedom. And Lenin drew the following substantiated conclusion: "Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic...."

"To fail to see this one must be incapable of presenting the question from the point of view of the oppressed classes:

"Is there a single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the average rank-and-file worker, the average rank-and-file farm labourer, or village

semi-proletarian generally (i.e., the representative of the oppressed, of the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such liberty of holding meetings in the best buildings, such liberty of using the largest printing-plants and biggest stocks of paper to express his ideas and to defend his interests, such liberty of promoting men and women of his own class to administer and to 'knock into shape' the state as in Soviet Russia?"

"It is ridiculous to think that Mr Kautsky could find in any country even one out of a thousand of well-informed workers or farm labourers who would have any doubts as to the reply. Instinctively, from hearing fragments of admissions of the truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the whole world sympathise with the Soviet Republic precisely because they regard it as a proletarian democracy, a democracy for the poor, and not a democracy for the rich that every bourgeois democracy, even the best, actually is."²

Today, when the bourgeois mass media in the West is monopolised by a handful of magnates, the "kings" of the press, radio and television, there is a rigid state-monopoly control that ultimately makes immutable the positions of the ruling class in the matter of "disseminating ideas". The myth about the "freedom of speech" under capitalism, debunked by Lenin, remains just that today too.

Urho Kekkonen, Finland's eminent postwar politician, has said that "the traditional Western concept of freedom, in accordance with

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 248-49.

which a state does not guarantee its citizens anything but the freedom to act, means that society allows every citizen to make use of the freedom of speech with the help of the resources at his disposal. Moreover, in practice, freedom of the speech has turned above all into a freedom for the rich." American journalists Barry Cole and Mal Ettinger have shown in their book about U.S. television how it has become a branch of the economy that is rigidly controlled by the state political machine.

Unfortunately, and the above-mentioned book may serve as an example, many people in other countries who have stopped harbouring any illusions about the "freedom of speech" in the West have not much of an idea how it works in the U.S.S.R. because they are not sufficiently well informed. Very often one may see in Western literature the claim that "after Lenin" this freedom has become formal and that it is allowed to use it only to "praise" the actions of the authorities.

One can best refute this claim by acquainting oneself with the contents of the Soviet press. Specialists have calculated that every fifth article on local subjects in the national newspapers contains criticism of some official. It may be directed at the work of a factory manager and the activity of a minister. Moreover, criticism in the press is not just a lot of "hot air". Soviet newspapers have special sections for information about the results of criticism, showing what steps have been taken to eliminate the criticised shortcomings. An executive of any rank, including the highest, must reply to critical remarks through the press.

The 1977 Constitution of the U.S.S.R. further

develops and deepens the principle of the freedom of speech, guaranteeing each Soviet citizen the right to criticise. It includes a special provision (Article 49) which specifies this right. "Every citizen of the U.S.S.R.," it says, "has the right to submit proposals to state bodies and public organisations for improving their activity, and to criticise shortcomings in their work. Officials are obliged, within established time-limits, to examine citizens' proposals and requests, to reply to them, and to take appropriate action. Persecution for criticism is prohibited. Persons guilty of such persecution shall be called to account." The need strictly to abide by this provision of the Constitution was also stressed at the 26th CPSU Congress. "Any attempt at persecution for criticism must be resolutely cut short," the Central Committee report emphasised. "Our stand on this question is clearly recorded in the Party Rules. It is also reflected in the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. There must be no condoning of those who muzzle criticism—such is the demand of both the Party and the state law."¹

The democratism of the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. has grown into the democratism of the epoch of developed socialism. The rights and freedoms of the Soviet citizen have become richer and more varied, and the guarantees thereof more reliable, and this does not apply solely to the rights and freedoms of social character inherent only in socialism—

¹ *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1981, p. 97.

the right to work, the right to rest and leisure, education, health protection, and housing. In guaranteeing the traditional freedoms proclaimed back in the course of bourgeois revolutions, socialism has excelled capitalism. Lenin's thesis that socialist democracy is superior to bourgeois democracy is constantly confirmed by life itself.

Let us sum up briefly what we have said in this chapter. Polemising with Kautsky, Lenin upheld the following theses of the Marxist theory of democracy:

1. As a form of state, democracy inevitably is of class character, a special constitutional, juridical and political expression of the domination of one class by another. The concept of "pure democracy" championed by Kautsky is anti-scientific in content and reactionary in its political aims because it objectively backs the ideological myth about the "supraclass nature" of the bourgeois state and bourgeois democracy.

2. Even in countries with the most democratic constitutions, bourgeois democracy always remains a form of bourgeois class domination, a "paradise for the rich". Criticising Kautsky for his formal assessment of the institutions of bourgeois democracy, Lenin showed that the democratic procedure of state administration under capitalism served to perpetuate the system of exploitation. What makes the rights and freedoms proclaimed by liberal constitutions false and hypocritical is that the working masses are deprived of the possibility of really taking part in the adoption of political decisions. In critical moments, when the class rule of the bourgeoisie is really threatened, the ruling class renounces democratic principles and turns

to methods of terroristic suppression of the political activity of the exploited majority.

3. The proletarian democracy succeeding bourgeois democracy is the highest form of democracy. Enlisting the participation of millions of working people in state administration, it really guarantees the realisation of the rights and freedoms which are largely formal under capitalism. The revolutionary creative activities of the working people of Russia, led by the proletariat, created a model of socialist democracy—Soviet democracy—that has proved its effectiveness. Exposing the counter-revolutionary essence of Kautsky's attacks on the Soviets, Lenin showed how socialist democracy ensured in practice the participation of the working people in state administration and opened wide vistas for genuine popular self-government.

4. METHODOLOGICAL ADVICE

A person studying Lenin's book *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* would do well to acquaint himself with the ideas of Marx and Engels over which Lenin polemised with Kautsky in upholding the revolutionary essence of Marxism. These ideas are contained in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Marx and Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* by Engels, *Anti-Dühring* by Engels, *The Civil War in France* and *Critique of the Gotha Programme* by Marx, and some other works.

Moreover, it would be well to familiarise oneself with Lenin's works which were published before *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* and assessed Kautsky's position on imperialism and the tasks of the proletarian revolution in the conditions of imperialism. These works include the article "Socialism and War" (1915) and the books *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916) and *The State and Revolution*, written in August and September 1917.

The study of the above-mentioned works by Marx, Engels and Lenin makes it possible to understand the novel manner in which a number of questions about the revolution are raised in Lenin's *The Proletarian Revolution and the*

Renegade Kautsky.

Let us briefly recall the contents of this work in the sequence followed by Lenin.

The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky embodies a single harmonious logical conception and consists of a preface, eight chapters and two appendices.

In the preface Lenin points to the need ideologically and theoretically to criticise Kautsky's views and analyses his gradual deviation from Marxism.

The chapter "How Kautsky Turned Marx into a Common Liberal" criticises in detail the stand taken by Kautsky who refuted the historical need of proletarian statehood in the transition period from capitalism to socialism. The chapter thoroughly discloses the meaning of Kautsky's errors and formulates a genuinely Marxist answer to the question regarding the fundamental content of the proletarian revolution.

The next chapter of the book, "Bourgeois and Proletarian Democracy", is devoted to the theoretical analysis of the basic political difference between the democracy of bourgeois society and socialist democracy. The theoretical propositions of the chapter are rounded out with the conclusion about socialist democracy as a new, higher type of democracy. A similar task is dealt with by the chapter "Can There Be Equality Between the Exploited and the Exploiter?" in which the political superiority of the new type of democracy is shown up by the analysis of the economic content of production relationships in capitalist and socialist societies.

The next three chapters—"The Soviets Dare Not Become State Organisations", "The Constituent Assembly and the Soviet Republic" and

"The Soviet Constitution"—contain an analysis of concrete material, the experience of the first year of Soviet power, and clinchingly prove correct Lenin's criticism of Kautsky's arbitrary interpretation of the Marxist theses concerning the state, revolution and democracy.

The chapter "What Is Internationalism?" plays, in the logical scheme of Lenin's book, the role of the final stage in the study of the theoretical aspects of the proletarian revolution. It discloses the substance of the international policy of the revolutionary proletariat and reveals the significance and topicality of the international experience of Bolshevism for the practical tasks of the socialist transformation of society.

The last chapter, "Subservience to the Bourgeoisie in the Guise of 'Economic Analysis'", *Appendix I*, "Theses on the Constituent Assembly" and *Appendix II*, "Vandervelde's New Book on the State" are designed to show how Kautsky's theoretical errors affect the course of the ideological struggle and help substantiate the bourgeoisie's anti-labour policy. Retaliating to the sallies of bourgeois ideologists and exposing Kautsky's doctrine of "pure democracy" as invalid, Lenin's *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* is an effective ideological weapon in the proletariat's struggle for its emancipation.

To gain a clearer picture of the innovatory nature of Lenin's work and its contribution to the development of the Marxist teaching about the state and democracy, proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and proletarian internationalism, it would do well to examine the following questions at seminars

and discussions, and in independent research:

1. Why the socialist revolution is a prerequisite for the transition from capitalism to socialism; what is revolutionary violence; against whom it is directed and what constructive role it plays in the socialist transformation of society; why the liberal approach to the question of the socialist revolution is invalid.

2. What is the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a state of the transition period; why and how the revolution must be able to defend itself; what are the creative functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

3. What is the explanation of the class nature of democracy; how the liberal concept of "pure democracy" proves itself invalid; what are the boundaries and possibilities of democracy under capitalism.

4. Why socialist democracy is a democracy of the highest type; in what socialist democracy differs from bourgeois democracy; what are the peculiarities of the Soviets as a form of socialist democracy.

5. In what the principle of proletarian internationalism expresses itself; what is the explanation of the internationalist nature of the proletarian revolution; what is the international significance of the experience of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917.

In examining these questions it is well to study additional literature on the history of the Soviet Union about Lenin's ideological struggle against opportunism in the Russian and international working-class movement. Knowledge of the history of the international working-class movement will help properly to understand the train of Lenin's thought in *The Proletarian*

Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky and the methodology of Lenin's organic combination of theoretical analysis with practical experience. In this book, as in Lenin's other works, theoretical conclusions are drawn not only on the basis of generalisation of Marx's and Engels's ideas, but also as the result of a concrete analysis of revolutionary struggle.

The topicality of Lenin's ideas, enunciated in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, is a cause of their further study. To master these ideas is to be able to use them in assessing the present socio-political trends of world development.

The study of *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* will help comprehend the essence of the contemporary ideological struggle around the theoretical legacy of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and see the significance of the unity of the revolutionary movement for the present struggle for peace, democracy and social progress.

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